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# SPECIAL METHOD

FOR

LITERATURE AND HISTORY

IN

THE COMMON SCHOOLS.

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BY CHARLES A. MCMURRY, PH.D.

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SECOND EDITION.

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## PREFACE.

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This is the first of a series of small books treating of special method in each of the common school studies. The plan is to outline courses for each important branch of school work, to discuss the value of the materials and to explain the method of treatment in classes. The relation of studies to each other will receive much incidental notice.

The series of *Special Methods* is designed to carry forward to a fuller application and in definite detail the principles discussed in the *General Method*.

This first of the series of *Special Methods* is a selection and discussion of those literary and historical materials which are adapted to an *oral treatment* throughout the grades. In the history work of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, books and references may be much used by the children.

The use of the best English classics as regular reading books in all the grades will be discussed in the second number of the *Special Methods* (now in press).

Another series of books is in preparation in which the actual materials (Fairy Tales, Robinson Crusoe, etc.) to be handled in history and literature, as here discussed, will be presented in the simple form required in the schools. Our plan, therefore, is to advance from the most general statement of principles to the most specific application to particular studies.

*Normal, Illinois, September 26, 1894.*

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## HISTORY AND LITERATURE.

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The formative influence of classic literature and good reading upon young people is generally acknowledged. With many boys and girls who show a taste for it, the reading of choice books is held to be a sign of intellectual and moral progress. Such a taste once formed, is regarded as a strong protection and aid in the coming work of education. But where does this taste for literature properly begin, and how may it be fostered among average boys and girls? The schools of to-day are not in the habit of seriously meeting this problem till children are verging into manhood and womanhood, toward the close of the grammar grades. What of the years from six to fourteen, devoted especially to the common school, in which the great majority of children receive their whole school training? If there are choice stories, epics, and histories which have power to impress youthful thought, fancy, and feeling, let the early years reap the full benefit. Even those first entering the school should find something fair and attractive in the stories presented to them in the early months. In each grade the children should be led through some of the garden-plots of

literature, leaving rich memories behind and gaining a culture that will abide through life.

By keeping steadily in view the leading purpose, to lift and strengthen moral character by means of materials of instruction suited to the needs of children, lesser advantages will follow. The highest aims in education, if wisely pursued, will yield much fruitage to the secondary aims. Those stories and books which reveal the best typical men and women in action, furnish also the most interesting and instructive lessons in other respects. The poet instinctively seizes what is beautiful and good for the highest manifestation of his art. If ignoble characters appear, it is as a foil to choicer spirits. To banish formalism from our schools we need the presence of interesting and stimulating characters, not simply as embodied in the teachers, but also as exhibited in the history and literature studied. Important as formal drill is, no teacher can find in this his best expression and influence. Sympathy with human life and struggle is the most inspiring force in schools as well as outside of them. The interest awakened is a fair gauge of the value of the work done in a school, and for native interest there is nothing that can surpass the best literature. To put this literature into the hands of teachers and to cause them to feel responsible for the transmission of its best treasures to children is a thing to lend priestly dignity to our calling.

Of necessity, the school must be the first to pioneer the children into these regions of delight. Not many homes are capable of giving them a fit entrance. There should be no jealousy between school and home at this juncture, but rather mutual support. The school knows best how to open the doors and lead the children in; or at least it should be the pride of teachers to fit themselves for this duty. The school has more time and equipment for this work than the home, although it can only imitate the sympathetic qualities of the home. At the best, teachers can only make a beginning, cultivate a taste and habit, open the eyes and sympathies of children for what is beautiful and good, hoping that home, friends, libraries, and life's opportunities will do the rest. What books to select, and how to best present the stories to children, can be better judged by thoughtful educators than by parents. There is a vast amount of sham in literature, and pupils and parents, to a large extent, are not good judges of excellent, as compared with inferior, products. Few teachers, indeed, would be prepared to make a good selection of our best literary materials for children. But this is our problem, and considering the great interests at stake, the millions of boys and girls growing up to life's duties among us, it behooves us to spare neither labor nor pains to sift out the best for each school year.

American history and literature supply some

choice materials, while England, Germany, Greece, and other countries furnish myths and epical stories of great culture value. We glean from broad literary fields and from the history of many lands. It may surprise us also to find that it is the profound literary artists and critics that can help us most in selecting choice products for children. At this point the university and the first primary school are drawn into the closest relation. Men of profound learning like the brothers Grimm, Herder, and Goethe have opened up to the world the treasures of literature for children. It can not but inspire and ennoble the primary teacher to know that she is cultivating her own mind on some of the best literary masterpieces, and while teaching children is only making use of what the best poetic minds have prepared.

Our purpose is to discuss a few of those literary masterpieces which may be made use of in schools, beginning with the first primary grade.

## FAIRY TALES.

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Young children, as we all know, are delighted with stories, and in the first grade they are still in this story-loving period. A good story is the best medium through which to convey ideas and also to approach the difficulties of learning to read. Such a story, Wilmann says, is a pedagogical treasure. By many thinkers and primary teachers the *fairy stories* have been adopted as best suited to the wants of the little folk just emerging from the home. A series of fairy tales was selected by Ziller, one of the leading Herbartians, as a center for the school work of the first year. These stories have long held a large place in the home culture of children, especially of the more cultivated class. Now it is claimed that what is good for the few whose parents may be cultured and sympathetic, may be good enough for the children of the common people and of the poor. Moreover, stories that have made the fireside more joyous and blessed may perchance bring vivacity and happiness into school rooms. The home and the school are coming closer together. It is even said that well-trained, sympathetic primary teachers may better tell and impress these stories than over-



worked mothers and busy fathers. If these literary treasures are left for the homes to discover and use, the majority of children will know little or nothing of them. Some schools in this country and still more in Germany have been using them in the first grade in recent years with a pleasing effect.

But what virtue lies concealed in these fairy myths for the children of our practical and sensible age? Why should we draw from fountains whose sources are back in the prehistoric and even barbarous past? To many people it appears as a curious anachronism to nourish little children in the last decade of this century upon food that was prepared in the tents of wandering tribes in early European history. What are the merits of these stories for children just entering upon scholastic pursuits? They are known to be generally attractive to children of this age, but many sober-minded people distrust them. Are they really meat and drink for the little ones? And not only so, but the choicest meat and drink, the best food upon which to nourish their unfolding minds?

Fairy tales are charged with misleading children by falsifying the truth of things. And, indeed, they pay little heed to certain natural laws that practical people of good sense always respect. A child, however, is not so hum-drum practical as these serious truth-lovers. A little girl talks to her doll as if it had real ears. She and her little

brother make tea-cups and saucers out of acorns with no apparent compunctions of conscience. They follow Cinderella to the ball in a pumpkin chariot, transformed by magic wand, with even greater interest than we read of a presidential ball. A child may turn the common laws of physical nature inside out and not be a whit the worse for it. Its imagination can people a pea-pod with little heroes aching for a chance in the big world, or it can put tender personality into the trunk and branches of the little pine-tree in the forest. There are no space limits that a child's fancy will not spring over in a twinkling. It can ride from star to star on a broom-stick, or glide over peaceful waters in a fairy boat drawn by graceful swans. Without suggestion from mother or teacher, children put life and personality into their playthings. Their spontaneous delights are in this playful exercise of the fancy, in masquerading under the guise of a soldier, bear, horse, or bird. The fairy tale is the poetry of children's inner impulse and feeling; their sparkling eyes and absorbed interest show how fitting is the contact between these child-like creations of the poet and their own budding thoughts.

In discussing the qualities requisite in a fairy story to make it a pedagogical treasure, Wilmann says: "When it is laid down as a first and indispensable requirement that a story be genuinely childlike, the demand sounds less rigorous than

it really is. It is easier to feel than to describe the qualities which lend to a story the true childlike spirit. It is not simplicity alone. A simple story that can be understood by a child is not on that account childlike. The simplicity must be the ingenuousness of the child. Close to this lies the abyss of silliness into which so many children's stories tumble. A simple story may be manufactured, but the quality of true simplicity will not be breathed into it unless one can draw from the deeper springs of poetic invention. It is not enough that the externals of the story, such as situation and action, have this character, but the sensibilities and motives of the actors must be ingenuous and childlike; they should reflect the child's own feeling, wish, and effort. But it is not necessary on this account that the persons of the story be children. Indeed the king, prince, and princess, if they only speak and act like children, are much nearer the child's comprehension than any of the children paraded in a manufactured story, designed for the 'industrious youth.' For just as real poetry so the real child's story lies beyond reality in the field of fancy. With all its plainness of thought and action, the genuine child's story knows how to take hold of the child's fancy and set its wings in motion. And what a meaning has fancy for the soul life of the child as compared with that of the adult. For us the activity of fancy only sketches arabesques, as it were, around the sharply

defined pictures of reality. The child thinks and lives in such arabesques, and it is only gradually that increasing experience writes among these arabesques the firmer outlines of things. The child's thoughts float about playfully and unsteadily, but the fairy tale is even lighter-winged than they. It overtakes these fleeting summer birds and wafts them together without brushing the dust from their wings.

“But fostering the activity of fancy in children is a means, not an end. It is necessary to enter the field of fancy because the way to the child's heart leads through the fancy. The effect upon the heart of the child is the second mark and proof of the genuine child's story. We are not advocates of the so-called moral stories which are so short-winded as to stop frequently and rest upon some moral commonplace. Platitudes and moral maxims are not designed to develop a moral taste in the minds of young children, for they appeal to the understanding and will of the pupil and presuppose what must be first built up and established. True moral training is rather calculated to waken in the child *judgments* of right and wrong, of good and evil (on simple illustrative examples). Not the impression left by a moralizing discourse is the germ of a love of the good and right, but rather the child's judgment, springing from its own conviction. ‘That was good.’ ‘What a mean thing!’

“Those narratives have a moral force which introduce persons and acts that are simple and transparent enough to let the moral light shine through, that possess sufficient life to lend warmth and vigor to moral judgments. No attempt to cover up or pass over what is bad, nor to paint it in extravagant colors. For the bad develops the judgment no less than the good. It remains only to have a care that a child's interest inclines toward the good, the just, and the right.”

Wilmann summarizes the essentials of a good story, and then discusses the fairy tales as follows:

“There are then five requirements to be made of a real child's story: Let it be truly childlike, that is, both simple and full of fancy; let it form morals in the sense that it introduces persons and matters which, while simple and lively, call out a moral judgment of approval or disapproval; let it be instructive and lead to thoughtful discussions of society and nature; let it be of permanent value, inviting perpetually to a re-perusal; let it be a connected whole, so as to work a deeper influence and become the source of a many-sided interest.

“The child's story which, on the basis of the aforementioned principles, can be made the starting-point for all others, is Grimm's fairy tale of folklore. We are now called upon to show that the folk-lore fairy tale answers to the foregoing requirements, and in this we shall see many a ray

of light cast back upon these requirements themselves.

“Is the German fairy tale childlike? full of simplicity as well as of fancy? A deeply poetic saying of Jacob Grimm may teach us the answer. ‘There runs through these poetic fairy tales the same deep vein of purity by reason of which children seem to us so wonderful and blessed. They have, as it were, the same pale-blue, clear, and lustrous eyes which can grow no more although the other members are still delicate and weak and unserviceable to the uses of earth.’ Klaiber quotes this passage in his ‘Das Märchen und die Kindliche Phantasie,’ and says with truth and beauty, ‘Yes; when we look into the trusting eyes of a child, in which none of the world’s deceit is to be read as yet, when we see how these eyes brighten and gleam at a beautiful fairy tale, as if they were looking out into a great, wide, beautiful wonder-world, then we feel something of the deep connection of the fairy story with the childish soul.’ We will bring forward one more passage from a little treatise, showing depth and warmth of feeling, which stealthily takes away from the doubters their scruples about the justification of the fairy tale. ‘It is strange how well the fairy tale and the child’s soul mutually understand each other. It is as if they had been together from the very beginning and had grown up together. As a rule the child only deals with

that part of real life which concerns itself and children of its age. Whatever lies beyond this is distant, strange, unintelligible. Under the leading of the fairy tale, however, it permits itself to be borne over hill and valley, over land and sea, through sun and moon and stars even to the end of the world, and everything is so near, so familiar, so close to its reach, as if it had been everywhere before, just as if obscure pictures within had all at once become wonderfully distinct. And the fairies all, and the king's sons, and the other distinguished personages, whom it learns to know through the fairy tale, they are as natural and intelligible as if he had moved his life long in the highest circles, and had had princes and princesses for his daily playmates. In a word, the world of the fairy tale is the child's world, for it is the world of fancy.'

“For this reason children live and move in fairyland, whether the story be told by the mother or by the teacher in the primary school. What attention as the story proceeds! What anxiousness when any danger threatens the hero, be he king's son or a wheat-straw! What grief, even to tears, when a wrong is practiced upon some innocent creature! And far from it that the joy in the fairy tale decrease when it is told or discussed over again. Then comes the pleasure of representation—bringing the story upon the stage. Though a child has but to represent a flower in

the meadow, the little face is transfigured with the highest joy.

“But the childish joy of fairy tales passes away; not so the inner experiences which it has brought with it. I am not affirming too much when I say that he who, as a child, has never listened with joy to the murmuring and rustling of the fresh fountain of fairyland, will have no ear and no understanding for many a deep stream of German poetry. It is, after all, the modest fountain of fairy song which, flowing and uniting with the now noisy, now soft and gently flowing, current of folk song and with the deep and earnest stream of tradition, which has poured such a refreshing current over German poetry, out of which our most excellent Uhland has drawn so many a heart-strengthening draft.

“The spirit of the people finds expression in fairy tale as in tradition and song, and if we were only working to lift and strengthen the national impulse, a moral educative instruction would have to turn again and again to these creations of the people. What was asserted as a general truth in regard to classical products, that they are a bond between large and small, old and young, is true of national stories and songs more than of anything else. They are at once a bond between the different classes, a national treasure, which belongs alike to rich and poor, high and low. The common school then has the least right of all to



put the fairy tale aside, now that few women versed in fairy lore, such as those to whom Grimm listened, are left.

“But does the fairy tale come of noble blood? Does it possess what we called in the case of classics, an old title of nobility? If we keep to this figure of speech, we shall find that the fairy tale is not only noble, but a very royal child among stories. It has ruled from olden times, far and wide, over many a land. Hundreds of years gone, Grimm’s fairy stories lived in the people’s heart, and not in Germany alone. If our little ones listen intent to *Aschenputtel*, French children delighted in *Cendrillon*, the Italian in *Cenerentola*, the Polish in *Kopciuszka*. The fact that mediæval story books contain Grimm’s tales is not remarkable, when we reflect that traits and characteristics of the fairy tale reach back beyond the Christian period; that Frau Holle is Hulda, or Frigg, the heathen goddess; that ‘Wishing-cap,’ ‘Little Lam-leg,’ and ‘Table Cover Thyself,’ etc., are made up out of the attributes of German gods. Finally, such things as ‘The Sleeping Beauty,’ which is the earth in winter sleep, that the prince of summer wakes with kisses in spring-time, point back to the period of primitive Indo-German myth.

“But in addition to the requirement of classical nobility, has the fairy story also the moral tone which we required of the genuine child’s story? Does the fairy story make for morals?

To be sure it introduces to an ideal realm of simple moral relations. The good and bad are sharply separated. The wrong holds for a time its supremacy, but the final victory is with the good. And with what vigor the judgment of good and evil, of right and wrong, is produced. We meet touching pictures, especially of good-will, of faithfulness, characteristic and full of life. Think only of the typical interchange of words between Lenchen and Fundevogel. Said Lenchen: 'Leave me not and I will never leave thee.' Said Fundevogel: 'Now and nevermore.' We are reminded of the bible words of the faithful Ruth, 'Whither thou goest I will go; where thou lodgest I will lodge; where thou diest will I die and there will I be buried.'

"Important for the life of children is the rigor with which the fairy tale punishes disobedience and falsehood. Think of the suggestive legendary story of the child which was visited again and again with misfortune because of its obstinacy, till its final confession of guilt brings full pardon. It is everywhere a Christian thread which runs through so many fairy stories. It is love for the rejected, oppressed, and abandoned. Whatever is loaded with burdens and trouble receives the palm, and the first becomes the last.

"The fairy story fulfills the first three requirements for a true child's story. It is child-like, of lasting value, and fosters moral ideas.

As to *unity* it will suffice for children of six years (for this is, in our opinion, the age at which it exerts its moral force) that the stories be told in the same spirit, although they do not form one connected narrative. If a good selection of fairy tales according to their inner connection is made, so that frequent references and connections can be found, the requirement of unity will be satisfied.

“The fairy tale seems to satisfy least of all the demand that the true child’s story must be instructive, and serve as a starting point for interesting practical discussion. The fairy story seems too airy and dreamy for this, and it might appear pedantry to load it with instruction. But one will not be guilty of this mistake if one simply follows up the ideas which the story suggests. When the story of a chicken, a fox, or a swan is told it is fully in harmony with the childish thought to inquire into the habits of these animals. When the king is mentioned it is natural to say that we have a king, to ask where he lives, etc. Just because the fairy tale sinks deep and holds a firm and undivided attention, it is possible to direct the suggested thoughts hither or thither without losing the pleasure they create. If one keeps this aim in mind, instructive material is abundant. The fairy tale introduces various employments and callings, from the king to the farmer, tailor, and shoemaker. Many passages in life such as be-

trothal, marriage, and burial, are presented. Labors, in the house, yard, and field, and numerous animals, plants, and inanimate things are touched upon. For the observation of animals and for the relation between them and children, it is fortunate that the fairy tale presents them as talking and feeling. Thereby the interest in real animals is increased and heartlessness banished. How could a child put to the torture an animal which is an old friend in fairy story?

"I need only suggest in this place how the fairy story furnishes material for exercises in oral language, for the division of words into syllables and letters, and how the beginnings of writing, drawing, number, and manual exercises may be drawn from the same source.

"From the suggestions just made the following conclusions at least, may be reasonably drawn. A sufficient counterpoise to the fantastical nature of the fairy tale can be given in a manner, simple and childlike, if the objects and relations involved in the narratives, are brought clearly before the senses and discussed so that instruction about common objects and home surroundings is begun.'

—*Wilmann Paed. Vortraege.*

A selection of fairy stories suited to our first grade will differ from a similar selection for foreign schools. There has been a disposition among American teachers for several years to appropriate the best of these stories for use in the primary

schools. In different parts of the country skillful primary teachers have been experimenting successfully with these materials. In Illinois there are several schools in which both teachers and pupils have taken great delight in them. The effort has been made more particularly with first grade children, the aim of teachers being to lead captive the spontaneous interest of children from their first entrance upon school tasks. Some of the stories used at the first may seem light and farcical but experiments with children are a better test than the preconceived notions of adults who may have forgotten their early childhood. The story of the Four Musicians, for example, is a favorite with the children.

The children have no knowledge of reading or perhaps of letters. The story is told with spirit by the teacher, no book being used in the class. Question and interchange of thought between pupil and teacher will become more frequent and suggestive as the teacher becomes more skilled and sympathetic in her treatment of the story. In the early months of school life the aim is to gain the attention and co-operation of children by furnishing abundant food for thought. Children are required or at least encouraged to narrate the story or a part of it in the class. They tell it at school and probably at home, till they become more and more absorbed in it. Even the backward or timid child gradually acquires courage and en-

joys narrating the adventures of the peas in the pod or those of the animals in the Four Musicians.

The teacher should acquire a vivid and picturesque style of narrating, persistently weaving into the story, by query and suggestion, the previous home experiences of the children. They are only too ready to bring out these treasures at the call of the teacher. Often it is necessary to check their enthusiasm. There is a need not simply for narrative power, but for quick insight and judgment so as to bring their thoughts into close relation to the incidents. Nowhere in all the schools is there such a call for close and motherly sympathy. The gentle compulsion of kindness is required to inspire the timid ones with confidence. For some of them are slow to open their delicate thought and sensibility, even to the sunny atmosphere of a pleasant school.

A certain amount of drill in reproduction is necessary, but fortunately the stories have something that bears repetition with a growing interest. Added to this is the desire for perfect mastery and thus the stories become more dear with familiarity.

Incidentally, instructive information is gathered concerning animals and plants that are actors in the scenes. The commonest things of the house, field, and garden acquire a new and lasting interest. Sometimes the teacher makes provision in advance of the story for a deeper interest in the

plants and animals that are to appear. In natural science lessons she may take occasion to examine the pea blossom, or the animals of the barnyard, or the squirrel or bird in their cages. When a few days later the story touches one of these animals, there is a quick response from the children. This relation between history and natural science strengthens both.

Many an opportunity is given for the pupils to express a warm sympathy for gentle acts of kindness or unselfishness. The happiness that even a simple flower may bring to a home is a contagious example. Kindly treatment of the old and feeble, and sympathy for the innocent and helpless, spring into the child's own thought. The fancy, sympathy, and interest awakened by a good fairy tale make it a vehicle by which consciously and unconsciously a good many advantages are borne home to pupils.

Among other things, it opens the door to the *reading lesson*; that is, to the beginning efforts in mastering and using the symbols of written language. The same story which all have learned to tell, they are now about to learn to read from the board. One or two sentences are taken directly from the lips of the pupils as they recall the story, and the work of mastering symbols is begun at once with zest. First is the clear statement of some vivid thought by a child, then a quick association of this thought with its written symbols

on the board. There is no readier way of bringing thought and form into firm connection, that is, of learning to read. Keep the child's fresh mental judgment and the written statement clearly before his mind till the two are wedded. Let the thought run back and forth between them till they seem as one.

After fixing two or three sentences on the board, attention is directed more closely to the single words, and a rapid drill upon those in the sentence is followed by a discovery and naming of them in miscellaneous order in a column. Afterwards new sentences are formed by the teacher out of the same words, written on the board, and read by the children. They express different, and perhaps opposite forms of thought, and should exercise the child's sense and judgment as well as his memory of words. An energetic, lively, and successful drill of this kind upon sentences drawn from stories, has been so often witnessed, that its excellence is no longer a matter of question. Drill, however, and repetition, are essential, and this drill is a form of mental activity in which children delight if the teacher's manner is vigorous and pleasant.

When the mastery of new word-forms as wholes is fairly complete, the analysis may go a step further. Some new word in the lesson may be taken and separated into its phonic elements, as the word *hill*, and new words formed by drop-



ping a letter and prefixing letters or syllables, as ill, till, until, mill, rill, etc. The power to construct new words out of old materials should be cultivated all along the process of learning to read.

This plan of work for learning to read is both analytic and synthetic, proceeding from sentences to words, and from words to sounds, then leading back again to the construction of words and sentences from the sounds and words mastered. The sentence, word, and phonic methods of learning to read are utilized in this general plan. It makes the *content* of interesting thought the starting point, and the power to recognize and express this thought is exercised at each step, while the purely formal and drill work of learning the symbols of writing and reading, is so coupled with the child's own interests and needs as to become largely incidental.

Still other school activities of children stand in close relation to the fairy tales. They are encouraged to draw the objects and incidents in which the story abounds. Though rude and uncouth, the drawings still often surprise us with their truth and suggestiveness. The sketches reveal the content of a child's mind as almost nothing else—his misconceptions, his vague or clearly defined notions. They also furnish his mental and physical activities an employment exactly suited to his needs and wishes.

The power to *use good English* and to express himself clearly and fittingly, is cultivated from the very first. While this merit is purely incidental, it is none the less valuable. The persistence with which bad and uncouth words and phrases are employed by children in our common school, both in oral work and in composition, admonishes us to begin early to eradicate these faults. It seems often as if intermediate and grammar grades were more faulty and wretched in their use of English than primary grades. But there can be no doubt that early and persistent practice in the best forms of expression, especially in connection with interesting and appropriate thought matter, will greatly aid correctness, fluency, and confidence in speech. There is also a convincing pedagogical reason why children in the first primary should be held to the best models of spoken language. They enter the school better furnished with *oral speech* than with a knowledge of any school study. Their home experiences have wrought into close association and unity, word and thing. So intimate and living is the relation between word and thought or object, that a child really does not distinguish between them. This is the treasure with which he enters school, and it should not be wrapped up in a napkin. It should be unrolled at once and put to service. Oral speech is the capital with which a child enters the business of education; let him employ it.

A retrospect upon the various forms of school activity which spring, in practical work, from the use of a good fairy story, reveals how many-sided and inspiring are its influences. Starting out with a rich content of thought peculiarly germane to childish interests, it calls for a full employment of the language resources already possessed by the children. In the effort to picture out, with pencil or chalk, his conceptions of the story, a child exercises his fanciful and creative wit, as well as the muscles of arms and eyes. A good story always finds its setting in the midst of nature or society, and touches up with a simple, homely, but poetic charm, the commonest verities of human experience. The appeal to the sensibility and moral judgment of pupils is direct and spontaneous, because of the interests and sympathies that are inherent in persons and touch directly the childish fancy. And, lastly, the irrepressible traditional demand that children shall *learn to read*, is fairly and honestly met and satisfied.

It is not claimed that fairy tales involve the sum total of primary instruction, but they are an illustration of how rich will be the fruitage of our educational effort if we consider first the highest needs and interests of children, and allow the formal arts to drop into their proper subordination. "The best is good enough for children," and when we select the best, the wide-reaching connections

which are established between studies carry us a long step toward the now much-bruited correlation and concentration of studies.

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## LIST OF FAIRY TALES FOR FIRST GRADE.

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### FALL LITERATURE—First Term.

1. The Old Woman and Her Pig.—Scudder's Book of Folk Stories.
  2. Little Red Riding-Hood.—Grimm.
  3. The Anxious Leaf.—Beecher's "Norwood," *Public-School Journal*, December 1891.
  4. The Three Bears.—Scudder's Book of Folk Stories.
  5. The Lion and the Mouse.—Æsop, *Public-School Journal*, March 1893.
  6. The Little Match Girl.—Andersen.
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### WINTER LITERATURE—Second Term.

1. The Fir-Tree.—Andersen, *Public-School Journal*, 1893.
2. The Four Musicians.—Grimm.
3. The Discontented Pine-Tree.—Todd and Powell's Third Reader.
4. Cinderella.—Grimm.
5. The Straw, the Coal of Fire, and the Bean.—Grimm.

**SPRING LITERATURE—Third Term.**

1. The Ugly Duckling.—Andersen.
  2. The Proud Apple Branch.—Andersen.
  3. The King of Birds.—Grimm, *Intelligence*,  
June 15, 1893.
  4. The Pea Blossom.—Andersen, *Public-School  
Journal*, November, 1891.
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We are indebted for this list to Mrs. Lida B. McMurry, who has used it in first grade. These stories, adapted to first grade, are published by the Public-School Publishing Co., of Bloomington, Ill.

## ROBINSON CRUSOE.

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In selecting suitable literature for children of the second grade, we follow in the steps of a number of distinguished writers and teachers and choose an English classic—Robinson Crusoe. Rousseau gave this book his unqualified approval and said that it would be the first and, for a time, the only book that Emile should read. The Herbartians have been using it a number of years, while some American teachers have employed it for oral work in second grade, in a short school edition. In one sense, the book needs no introduction, as it has found its way into every nook and corner of the world. Originally a story for adults, it has reached all, and illustrated Christmas editions, designed even for children from three years and upward, are abundant. To the youth of all lands it has been, to say the least, a source of delight, but it has been regarded as a book for the family and home. What would happen should the school-master lay his hand on this treasure and desecrate it to school purposes! We desire to test this classic work on the side of its pedagogical value and its adaptation to the uses of regular instruction. If it is really unrivaled as a piece of children's

literature, perhaps it has also no equal for school purposes.

In making the transition from the fairy tale to Robinson Crusoe, an interesting difference or contrast may be noticed. Wilmann says: "Crusoe is at once simple, and plain, and fanciful; to be sure, in the latter case, entirely different from the fairy tale. In the fairy story the fancy seldom pushes rudely against the boundaries of the real world. But otherwise in Crusoe. Here it is the *practical fancy* that is aroused, if this expression appear not contradictory. What is Crusoe to do now? How can he help himself? What means can he invent? Many proposals of the children will have to be rejected. The inexorable 'not possible' shoves a bolt before the door. The fancy is compelled to limit itself to the task of combining and adjusting real things. The compulsion of things conditions the progress of the story. 'Thoughts dwell together easily, but things jostle each other roughly in space.'"

There are other striking differences between Crusoe and the folk-lore stories, but in this contrast we are now chiefly concerned. After reaching the island, he is checked and limited at every step by the physical laws imposed by nature. Struggle and fret as he may against these limits, he becomes at last a philosopher, and quietly takes up the struggle for existence under those inexorable conditions. The child of seven or eight is

vaguely acquainted with many of the simple employments of the household and of the neighborhood. Crusoe also had a vague memory of how people in society in different trades and occupations supply the necessities and comforts of life. Even the fairy stories give many hints of this kind of knowledge, but Robinson Crusoe is face to face with the sour facts. He is cut off from help and left to his own resources. The interest in the story is in seeing how he will shift for himself and exercise his wits to insure plenty and comfort. With few tools and on a barbarous coast, he undertakes what men in society, by mutual exchange and by division of labor, have much difficulty in performing. Crusoe becomes a carpenter, a baker and cook, a hunter, a potter, a fisher, a farmer, a tailor, a boatman, a stock-raiser, a basket-maker, a shoemaker, a tanner, a fruit-grower, a mason, a physician. And not only so, but he grapples with the difficulties of each trade or occupation in a bungling manner because of inexperience and lack of skill and exact knowledge. He is an experimenter and tester along many lines. The entire absence of helpers centers the whole interest of this varied struggle in one person. It is to be remembered that Crusoe is no genius, but the ordinary boy or man. He has an abundant variety of needs such as a child reared under civilized conditions has learned to feel. The whole range of activities, usually distributed to various



classes and persons in society, rests now upon his single shoulders. If he were an expert in all directions, the task would be easier, but he has only vague knowledge and scarcely any skill. The child, therefore, who reads this story, by reason of the slow, toilsome, and bungling processes of Crusoe in meeting his needs, becomes aware how difficult and laborious are the efforts by which the simple, common needs of all children are supplied.

A reference to the different trades and callings that Crusoe assumes will show us that he is not dealing with rare and unusual events, but with the common, simple employments that lie at the basis of society in all parts of the world. The carpenter, the baker, the farmer, the shoemaker, etc., are at work in every village in every land. Doubtless this is one reason why the story acquires such a hold in the most diverse countries. The Arab or the Chinese boy, the German or American child finds the story touching the ordinary facts of his own surroundings. Though the story finds its setting in a far away, lonely island in tropical seas, Crusoe is daily trying to create the objects and conditions of his old home in England. But these are the same objects that surround every child; and therefore, in reading Robinson Crusoe, the pupil is making an exhaustive and interesting study of *his own home*. The presence of a tropical vegetation and of a strange climate does not seriously impair this fact. The skill of a great liter-

ary artist appears in his power to create a situation almost devoid of common comforts and blessings and then in setting his hero to work to create them by single-handed effort.

It will hardly be questioned that the study of the home and home neighborhood by children is one of the large and prominent problems in education. Out of their social, economic, and physical environment children get the most important lessons of life. Not only does the home furnish a varied fund of information that enables them to interpret books, and people, and institutions, as they sooner or later go out into the world, but all the facts gathered by experience and reading in distant fields must flow back again to give deeper meaning to the labors and duties which surround each citizen in his own home. But society with its commerce, education, and industries, is an exceedingly complex affair. The child knows not where to begin to unravel this endless machinery of forms and institutions. In a sense he must get away from or disentangle himself from his surroundings in order to understand them. There are no complex conditions surrounding Crusoe, and he takes up the labors of the common trades in a simple and primitive manner. Physical and mental effort are demanded at every step, both from Crusoe and from the children. Many of his efforts involve repeated failure, as in making pottery, in building a boat,

while some things that he undertakes with painful toil never attain success. The lesson of toil and hardship connected with the simple industries is one of great moment to children. Our whole social fabric is based on these toils, and it is one of the best results of a sound education to realize the place and importance of hard work.

It scarcely needs to be pointed out that Crusoe typifies a long period of man's early history, the age when men were learning the rudiments of civilization by taking up the toils of the blacksmith, the agriculturist, the builder, the domesticator of animals and plants. Men emerged from barbarism as they slowly and painfully gained the mastery over the resources of nature. Crusoe is a sort of universal man, embodying in his single effort that upward movement of men which has steadily carried them to the higher levels of progress. It has been said with some truth that Robinson Crusoe is a philosophy of history. But we scarcely need such a high-sounding name. To the child he is a very concrete individual man, with very simple and interesting duties.

In a second point the author of Robinson Crusoe shows himself a literary master. There is an intense and naive realism in his story. Even if one were so disposed, it would require a strong effort to break loose from the feeling that we are in the presence of real experiences. There is a quiet but irresistible assumption of unvarnished

and even disagreeable fact in the narrative. But it is useless to describe the style of a book so familiar. Its power over youthful fancy and feeling has been too often experienced to be doubted. The vivid interest which the book awakens is certain to carry home whatever lessons it may teach with added force. So great is this influence that boys sometimes imitate the efforts of Crusoe by making caves, building ovens, and assuming a style of dress and living that approximates Crusoe's state. This supplies to teachers a hint of some value. The story of Crusoe should lead to excursions into the home neighborhood for the purpose of a closer examination of the trades and occupations there represented. An imitation of his labors may also be encouraged. The effort to mould and bake vessels from potter's clay, the plating of baskets from willow withes, the use of tools in making boxes or tables may be attempted far enough to discover how lacking in practical ability the children are. This will certainly teach them greater respect for manual skill.

From the previous discussion it might appear that we regard the story of Crusoe as technological and industrial rather than moral. But it would be a mistake to suppose that a book is not moral because it is not perpetually dispensing moral platitudes. Most men's lives are mainly industrial. The display of moral qualities is only occasional and incidental. The development of

moral character is coincident with the labors and experiences of life and springs out of them, being manifested by the spirit with which one acts toward his fellow-men. But Crusoe was alone on his island and there might seem to be no opportunity to be moral in relation to others. Society, to be sure, was conspicuous by its absence. But the intense longing with which he thought of the home and companionships lost is perhaps the strongest sentiment in the book. His loneliness brings out most vividly his true relation to home and friends.

His early life, till the shipwreck, was that of a wayward and reckless youth, disobedient to parents and seemingly without moral scruples. Even during the first months upon the island there appears little moral change or betterment. But slowly the bitter experiences of his lonely life sober him. He finds a bible, and a fit of sickness reveals the distresses that may lie before him. When once the change has set in, it is rapid and thorough. He becomes devout, he longs to return to his parents and atone for his faults. A complete reformation of his moral disposition is effected. If one will take the pains to read the original Robinson Crusoe he will find it surprisingly serious and moral in its tone. He devotes much time to soliloquizing on the distresses of his condition and upon the causes which have brought him to misery. He diagnoses his case with an

amount of detail that must be tedious to children. The fact that these parts of the book often leave little direct impression upon children is proof that they are chiefly engaged with the adventure and physical embarrassments of Crusoe. For the present it is sufficient to observe that the story is deeply and intensely moral, both in its spirit and in the changes described in Crusoe.

We are next led to inquire whether the industrial and moral lessons contained in this story are likely to be extracted from it by a boy or girl who reads it alone, without the aid of a teacher. Most young readers of Crusoe are carried along by the interesting adventure. It is a very surprising and entertaining story. But children even less than adults are inclined to go deeper than the surface and draw up hidden treasures. De Foe's work is a piece of classic literature. But few people are inclined to get at the deeper meaning and spirit of a classical masterpiece unless they go through it in companionship with a teacher who is gifted to disclose its better meaning. This is true of any classical product we might mention. It should be the peculiar function of the school to cultivate a taste, and an appreciative taste, for the best literature; not by leaving it to the hap-hazard home reading of pupils, but by selecting the best things adapted to the minds of children and then employing their teaching skill to bring these treasures close to the hearts and sympathies of chil-

dren. Many young people do not read Robinson Crusoe at all; many others do not appreciate its better phases. The school will much improve its work by taking for its own this best of children's stories, and by extending and deepening the children's appreciation of a classic.

The story of Robinson Crusoe is made by the Herbartians the nucleus for the concentration of studies in the second year. This importance is given to it on account of its strong moral tone and because of its universal typical character in man's development. Without attempting a solution of the problem of concentration at this juncture, we should at least observe the relations of this story to the other studies. Wilmann says: "The *everywhere* and *nowhere* of the fairy tale gives place to the first geographical limitations. The continents, the chief countries of Europe come up, besides a series of geographical concepts such as island, coast, bay, river, hill, mountain, sea, etc. The difference in climate is surprising. Crusoe fears the winter and prepares for it, but his fear is needless, for no winter reaches his island." We have already observed its instructive treatment of the common occupations which prepare for later geographical study, as well as for natural science.

Many plants and animals are brought to notice which would furnish a good beginning for natural science lessons. It is advisable, however, to study

rather those home animals and plants which correspond best to the tropical products or animals in lessons. Tropical fruits, the parrot, and the goat we often meet at home, but in addition, the sheep, the ox, the mocking-bird, the woodpecker, our native fruits and grains, and the fish, turtles, and minerals of the home, may well be suggested and studied in parallel courses with the life of Crusoe.

Although the story should be given and discussed orally, the children should also read it later as a part of the regular reading exercise of the course. Instead of suffering from this repetition, their interest will only be increased. Classical products usually gain by repetition. The facts are brought out more clearly and the deeper meaning is perceived. To have the oral treatment of a story precede its reading by some weeks or months produces an excellent effect upon the style of the reading. The thought being familiar, and the interest strong, the expression will be vigorous and natural. Children take a pride in reading a story which they at first must receive orally for lack of reading power.

The same advantageous drill in the use of good English accrues to the Crusoe story that was observed in the fairy tales. There is abundant opportunity for oral narrative and description.

A similar use of the pencil and chalk in graphically representing the objects of study is carried



forward. Thus the eye becomes more accurate in its observation and the hand more facile in tracing the outlines of the interesting forms studied.

In thus glancing over the field we discover the same many-sided and intimate relation with other school studies, as in the previous grade. In fact, *Crusoe* is the first extended classical masterpiece which is presented to the children as a whole. Such parts of the story as are of most pedagogical value should be simplified and woven together into a continuous narrative. That part of the story which precedes the shipwreck may be reduced to a few paragraphs which bring out clearly his early home surroundings, his disobedience and the desertion of his parents, and the voyage which led to his lonely life upon the island. The period embraced in his companionless labors and experiences constitutes the important part for school uses. A few of the more important episodes following the capture of Friday and his return home may be briefly told. We deem it a long step forward to get some of our great classical masterpieces firmly embedded in the early years of our school course. It will contribute almost as much to the culture and stimulation of teachers as of pupils.

The method of handling this narrative before the class will be similar to that of the fairy tales. A simple and vivid recital of the facts, with frequent questions and discussions, so as to draw the

**story closer to the child's own thought and experience, should be made by the teacher.** Much skill in illustrative device, in **graphic description**, in diagram or drawing, in the appeal to the **sense** experiences of the pupils, is in demand. The excursion to places of interest in the neighborhood suggested by the story begins to be an important factor of the school exercises. As children grow older they acquire skill and confidence in oral narrative, and should be held to greater independence in oral reproductions.

The story of *The Seven Little Sisters*, by Jane Andrews, has been much used in our schools with a similar oral treatment. It seems well adapted to the first part of the second grade, before beginning *Crusoe*. The *Crusoe* story may often be continued to advantage into the third grade. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston. Price, 60 cents.

One of the best school editions of *Robinson Crusoe* is published by Ginn & Co. Price, 50 cents.

A simple edition for second grade is published by the Public-School Publishing Co.

## THE MYTHICAL STORIES.

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In the third grade we wish to bring a number of the mythical stories vividly before the children. The classical myths which belong to the literature of Europe are the fund from which to select the best. Not all, but only a few of the simple and appropriate stories are chosen. Only two recitation periods a week are to be set apart for the oral treatment of these classical myths. But later in the progress of the reading lessons other stories should be treated. The few recitation periods used for oral work are rather designed to introduce children to the spirit of this literature, to get them into the appreciative mind.

This body of ancient myths comes down to us, sifted out of the early literature of the active-minded Greeks. They have found their way as a simple and charming poetry into the national literature of all the European countries. Is this the material suited to nine and ten-year-old children? It will not be questioned that these myths belong to the best literary products of Europe, but are they suited to children?

It is evident that some of our best literary judges have deemed them appropriate. Hawthorne

has put them into a form designed especially for the young folk. Charles Kingsley wrote of the Greek myths for his children: "Now I love these old Hellens heartily and they seem to me like brothers, though they have all been dead and gone many a hundred years. They are come to tell you some of their old fairy tales, which they loved when they were young like you. For nations begin at first by being children like you, though they are made up of grown men. They are children at first like you—men and women with children's hearts; frank, and affectionate, and full of trust, and teachable, loving to see and learn all the wonders around them; and greedy also, too often, and passionate and silly, as children are."

Not a few other authors of less note have tried to turn the classical myths of the old Greek poets into simple English for the entertainment and instruction of children. Scarcely any of these stories that have not appeared in various children's books in recent years. Taken as a whole, they are a storehouse of children's literature. The philosopher, Herbart, looked upon the poems of Homer as giving ideal expression to the boyhood of the race, and the story of Ulysses was regarded by him as the boy's book. For the child of eight or nine years he thought it the most suitable story.

Kingsley says in his introduction: "Now you must not think of the Greeks in this book as

learned men, living in great cities, such as they were afterwards, when they wrought all their beautiful works, but as country people, living on farms and in walled villages, in a simple, hard-working way; so that the greatest kings and heroes cooked their own meals and thought it no shame, and made their own ships and weapons, and fed and harnessed their own horses. So that a man was honored among them, not because he happened to be rich, but according to his skill and his strength and courage and the number of things he could do. For they were but grown up children, though they were right noble children too, and it was with them as it is now at school, the strongest and cleverest boy, though he be poor, leads all the rest."

In the introduction to the Wonder Book we find the following: "Hawthorne took a vital interest in child life. He was accustomed to observe his own children very closely. There are private manuscripts extant which present exact records of what his young son and elder daughter said or did from hour to hour, the father seating himself in their play room and patiently noting all that passed. To this habit of watchful and sympathetic scrutiny we may attribute in part the remarkable felicity, the fortunate ease of adaptation to the immature understanding, and the skillful appeal to the fresh imaginations which characterize his stories for the young." Haw-

thorne himself says : "The author has long been of the opinion that many of the classical myths were capable of being rendered into very capital reading for children. \* \* \* No epoch of time can claim a copyright on these immortal fables. They seem never to have been made, and so long as man exists they can never perish; but by their indestructibility itself they are legitimate subjects, for every age to clothe with its own garniture of manners and sentiment and to imbue with its own morality. \* \* \* The author has not always thought it necessary to write downward in order to meet the comprehension of children. He has generally suffered the theme to soar, whenever such was its tendency. Children possess an unestimated sensibility to whatever is deep or high in imagination or feeling so long as it is simple likewise. It is only the artificial and the complex that bewilder them."

A brief analysis of the qualities which render these myths so attractive will help us to see their value in the education of children.

The astonishing brightness of fanciful episode and of pure and clear cut imagery has an indestructible charm for children. They can soar into and above the clouds on the shining wings of Pegasus. With Eolus they shut up the contrary winds in an ox-hide and later let them out to plague the much-suffering Ulysses. They watch with astonishment as Jason yokes the fire-breath-

ing oxen and strews the field with uprooted stumps and stones as he prepares the soil for the seed of dragon's teeth. Each child becomes a poet as he recreates the sparkling brightness of these simple pictures. And when a child has once suffered his fancy to soar to these mountain heights and ocean depths, it will no longer be possible to make his life entirely dull and prosaic. He has caught glimpses of a bright world that will linger unfading in the uplands of his memory. And while they are so deep and lofty they are still, as Hawthorne says, very *simple*. Some of the most classic of the old stories are indeed too complete for third grade children; too many persons and too much complexity, as in the Tales of Troy. But on the other hand, many of the most beautiful of the old myths are as plain and simple to a child as a floating summer cloud. High in the sky they may be or deep in the reflection of some classic lake or spring, but clear and plain to the thought of a little child. These stories in their naïve simplicity reflect the wonder and surprise with which a person first beholds grand and touching scenery, whether it be the oppressive grandeur of some beetling mountain crag, or the placid quiet of a moonlit stream. The stories selected for this grade should be the simplest and best; The Golden Touch, Chimæra of Hawthorne, the episodes of the Golden Fleece, with others similar.

In one form or another they introduce us to the company of heroes, or, at least, of great and simple characters. Deeds of enterprise and manliness or of unselfishness and generosity are the climax of the story. To meet danger and hardship or ridicule for the sake of a high purpose is their underlying thought. Perseus and Jason and Ulysses are all ambitious to prove their title to superior shrewdness and courage. When we get fairly into the mythical age, we find ourselves among the heroes, among those striving for mastery and leadership in great undertakings. Physical prowess and manly spirit are its chief virtues. And can there be any question that there is a time in the lives of children when these ideas fill the horizon of their thought? Samson and David and Hercules, Bellerophon, and Jason, are a child's natural thoughts; or, at least, they fit the frame of his mind so exactly that one may say the picture and the frame were made for each other. The history of most countries contains such an age of heroes. Tell in Switzerland, Siegfried in Germany, Bruce in Scotland, Romulus and Horatius at Rome, Alfred in England, are all national heroes of the mythical age, whose deeds are heroic and of public good. The Greek stories are only a more classic edition of this historical epoch, and should lead up to a study of these later products of European literature.

Several forms of moral excellence are ob-



jectively realized or personified in these stories.

As the wise Centaur, after teaching Jason to be skillful and brave, sent him out into the world, he said: "Well, go, my son; the throne belongs to thy father and the gods love justice. But remember, wherever thou dost wander, to observe these three things:

"Relieve the distressed.

"Respect the aged.

"Be true to thy word."

—*Jason's Quest*, p. 55.

And many events in Jason's life illustrate the wisdom of these words. The miraculous pitcher is one whose fountain of refreshing milk bubbled always because of a gentle deed of hospitality to strangers. King Midas, on the other hand, experiences in most graphic form the punishment which ought to follow miserly greed, while his humble penitence brought back his daughter and the homely comforts of life. Bellerophon is filled with a desire to perform a noble deed that will relieve the distress of a whole people. After the exercise of much patience and self-control he succeeds in his generous enterprise. Many a lesson of worldly wisdom and homely virtue is brought out in the story of Ulysses' varied and adventure-some career.

These myths bring children into lively contact with European history and geography, as well as with its modes of life and thought. The early

history of Europe is in all cases shrouded in mist and legend. But even from this historically impenetrable past has sprung a literature that has exercised a profound influence upon the life and growth of the people. Not that children are conscious of the significance of these ideas, but being placed in an atmosphere which is full of them, their deeper meaning gradually unfolds itself. The early myths afford an interesting manner in which, especially for children, to come in contact with the history and geography of important countries. Those countries they must, sooner or later, make the acquaintance of both geographically and historically, and could anything be designed to take stronger hold upon their imagination and memory than these charming myths, which were the poetry and religion of the people once living there?

It is a very simple and primitive state of culture, whose ships, arms, agriculture, and domestic life are given us in clear and pleasing pictures. Our own country is largely lacking in a mythical age. Our culture sprang, more than half grown, from the midst of Europe's choicest nations, and out of institutions that had been centuries in forming. The myths of Europe are therefore as truly ours as they are the treasure of Englishmen, of Germans, or of Greeks. Again, our own literature, as well as that of European states, is full of the spirit and suggestion of the mythical age. Our poets and writers have drawn much of their

imagery from this old storehouse of thought, and a child will better understand the works of the present through this contact with mythical ages.

In method of treatment with school classes, they will admit of a variation from the plan used with Robinson Crusoe. One unaccustomed to the reading of such stories would be at a loss for a method of treatment with children. There is a charm and literary art in the presentation of the stories that would make the teacher feel unqualified to present them. The children are not yet sufficiently masters of the printed symbols of speech to read for themselves. Shall the teacher simply read the stories to children? We would suggest first of all, that the teacher, who would expect to make use of these materials, steep himself fully in literature of this class, and bring his mind into familiar acquaintance and sympathy with its characters. In interpreting classical authors to pupils, we are justified in requiring of the teacher intimate knowledge and appreciative sympathy with his author. Certainly no one will teach these stories well whose fancy was never touched into airy flights—who cannot become a child again and revel in its pleasures. No condescension is needed, but ascension to a free and ready flight of fancy. By learning to drink at these ancient fountains of song and poetry, the teacher might learn to tell a fairy story for himself. But doubtless it will be well to mingle oral narrative and description

on the part of the teacher with the fit reading of choice parts so as to better preserve the classic beauty and suggestion of the author. Children are quite old enough now to appreciate beauty of language and expressive, racy turns of speech. In the midst of question, suggestion, and discussion between pupil and teacher, the story should be carried forward, never forgetting to stop at suitable intervals and get such a reproduction of the story as the little children are capable of. And indeed they are capable of much in this direction, for their thoughts are more nimble, and their power of expression more apt, oftentimes, than the teacher's own.

We would not favor a simple reading of these stories for the entertainment of pupils. It should take more the form of a school exercise, requiring not only interest and attention, but vigorous effort to grasp and reproduce the thought. The result should be a much livelier and deeper insight into the story than would be secured by a simple reading for amusement or variety. They should prepare also for an appreciative reading of other myths in the following grades.

After all, in two or three recitation periods a week, extending through a year, it can not be expected that children will make the acquaintance of all the literature that could be properly called the myth of the heroic age in different countries. All that we may expect is to enter this

paradise of children, to pluck a few of its choicest flowers, and get such a breath of their fragrance that there will be a child's desire to return again and again. The school also should provide in the succeeding year for an abundance of reading of myths. The same old stories which they first learned to enjoy in oral recitations should be read in books, and still others should be utilized in the regular reading classes of the fourth and fifth grades. In this way the myths of other countries may be brought in, the story of Tell, of Siegfried, of Alaric, and of others.

In summarizing the advantages of a systematic attempt to get this simple classic lore into our schools, we recall the interest and mental activity which it arouses, its power to please and satisfy the creative fancy in children, its fundamental connection with the root ideas of European history and literature, its living personification of generous feeling and instincts, the virtues of bravery, manliness, and unselfishness, and all this in a classic form that still further increases its culture effect upon teacher and pupil. It should never be forgotten that teacher and pupil alike are here imbibing lessons and inspirations that draw them into closer sympathy because the subject is worthy of both old and young.

## BOOKS FOR THIRD GRADE.

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1. *The Wonder Book of Nathaniel Hawthorne.*

The following stories are especially recommended : The Gorgon's Head, The Golden Touch, The Miraculous Pitcher, and The Chimæra.

One should preserve as much as possible of the spirit and language of the author. Perhaps in classes with children the other stories will be found equally attractive. The Paradise of Children and the Three Golden Apples. Published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. Price, 40 cents.

2. *Kingsley's Greek Heroes.*

The stories of Perseus, the Argonauts, and Theseus, especially adapted to children. It is advisable for the teacher to abbreviate the stories, leaving out unimportant parts, but giving the best portions in the fullest detail. Published by Ginn & Co., of Boston.

3. *Jason's Quest*, by Lowell.

The story of the Argonauts with many other Greek myths woven into the narrative. This recent book is a store of excellent material. The teacher should select from it those parts specially suited to the grade. Published by Leach, Shewell & Sanborn, Chicago.

4. *Adventures of Ulysses*, by Lamb.

A small book from which the chief episodes of Ulysses' career can be obtained. Published by Ginn & Co., Boston. Price, 35 cents.

5. *Tales of Troy*, by DeGarmo.

The story of the siege of Troy and of the great events of Homer's Iliad. This story, on account of its complexity, we deem better adapted to the fourth grade. Published by Public-School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Ill. Price, 20 cents.

6. *Stories of the Old World*, by Church.

Stories of the Argo, of Thebes, of Troy, of Ulysses, and of Æneas. Stories are simply and well told. It is a book of 350 pages and would serve well as a supplementary reader in fourth grade. Published by Ginn & Co., of Boston. Price, 50 cents.

7. *Gods and Heroes*, by Francillon.

A successful effort to cover the whole field of Greek mythology in the story form. Ginn & Co.

8. *The Tanglewood Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne*.

A continuation of the Wonder Book. Price, 40 cents.

9. *Tales from Spenser*.

An interesting prose version of the stories of Una and the Lion, Prince Arthur, Britomart, etc. Macmillan & Co. Price, 50 cents.

10. *Heroes of Asgard*.

Stories of Norse mythology; simple and attractive. Macmillan & Co. Price, 50 cents.

## **PIONEER HISTORY STORIES.**

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### **FOR FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADES.**

After gaining an introduction to the wonder stories of early European history in the third grade, we find in our own early history suitable material for the fourth and fifth grades. Our first American history also belongs to the heroic age. It was the blossoming time for deeds of individual heroism. But it is practical and real. The old heroes of mythical times had to do with monsters and demi-gods, or with the huge forces of nature in uncouth personification, as Polyphemus, Scylla, and Charybdis. The heroes of this new world had more real and tangible hardships. Mountains, forests, rivers, stormy oceans, wild beasts, and Indians, and other untold hardships and distresses of people far from their sources of supply. In the first and second grades we found a striking contrast between the fanciful fairy tales and Robinson Crusoe's experiences. One transcends the laws of nature, the other is held in absolute subjection to them. The same contrast stands out between the stories of the mythical age and the pioneer histories. The early explorers and set-



tlers of our land first discovered and opened up its stretches of forest, mountain, and desert; then struggled manfully against savage difficulties to gain possession of its soil, and finally labored slowly and painfully to build houses, roads, villages, and all the later institutions of culture. It can hardly be said that our history stories can be used to advantage before the fourth grade, but for children of this grade they are well adapted.

It is not uncommon to find history stories in use in the first and second grades, and some even of our kindergartners employ the story of Columbus and of Washington and of others with still younger children. They claim also that much interest is awakened by such stories. The interest, however, that may be awakened by a skillful teacher is not a full proof of the pedagogical value of the stories for primary children. We claim that the children of the first and second grades especially are not mature enough to grasp these historical narratives. We wish to use the stories at that point where they will produce the greatest effect. Nor do we believe that a story should be repeated from year to year in successive grades. Let the story, with its full accompaniment of detail and environment, be told by the teacher and reproduced by the children at that time when they are able to understand it clearly and receive a strong and permanent impression. We have tested these pioneer histories from time to time

upon children of the third and fourth grades and have reached the conclusion that third grade pupils are not quite equal to a satisfactory grasp of them. The following discussion will make plain the qualitative elements in these stories that fit them for use in the fourth and fifth grades, rather than at other periods of the school course.

The pioneer stories constitute the first stages of an unbroken series of history studies, beginning in the fourth grade and extending beyond the limits of the common school. Taking up first the best early biographies of the home state, we advance to adjacent parts of the country, north, south, east, and west, until the main lines of pioneer life and its leading characters in the history of the United States have been treated.

In order to secure stories which are adapted to children of this age, certain limits in their selection must be observed. First, they should be *biographical* to secure simplicity and interest. Secondly, the conditions of society should be *simple* and *primitive*, easily surveyed and comprehended. This condition excludes stories from the period of the Revolution and of the Civil War unless they lie apart from the main struggle and have a distinct pioneer character of their own. Not that stories taken from the midst of the Revolution or of the Civil War are less interesting and valuable, but they should come later to illustrate the spirit and temper of those times. The

whole situation of a story, its historical setting, should be made transparent to the minds of children, and it is impossible for them to understand the complex movements of armies in a great national struggle, much less the state of government, legislation, and finance, inseparably connected therewith. Thirdly, they should exhibit the lives of men of *high character* and *purpose*, such as impress the mind with generous thoughts.

In the main, therefore, these stories must be selected from the narrow field of exploration and first settlement, before society had assumed complex forms, while commerce, manner of living, and government were still in their simplest beginnings. In any given part of the country, as in Massachusetts or California, the period of exploration and pioneer life was brief, but in the history of the United States and of North America as a whole it has lasted from the time of Columbus down almost to the present. In all its stages it has been a period of hardship and danger, calling out the most adventurous spirits and putting men of large physical and moral calibre under the necessity of exhibiting in bold relief their individual traits. Such men were La Salle, Boone, Penn, Clarke, and Lincoln.

No other country has had such a pioneer history, such a race of men as the early Friends, the Virginians, the Puritans, the French, the Scotch-Irish, pushing westward to subdue and civilize a

continent. The early history of England, Germany, or Italy, is hid in myth or savage warfare. The Spanish explorers and conquerors of the New World teach us mostly lessons of cruelty, rapine, and inordinate love of gold. They serve as warning rather than as example. But the best nations of Europe were sifted by persecution in order to find seed fit for the planting of those colonies, from which the United States derive their traditions. There is scarcely one of our states whose early history is not connected with the stirring deeds of one or more of these noted pioneers. No matter in what part of the country a child may be born and raised, he may meet the best spirit of our history in the early biographies of his own state.

Fortunate is that land whose early history is so full of profitable lessons, for there is no part of its annals that is destined to have such a telling influence upon its rising children. If the Romans, by studying their ancestral and traditional history, could train up such men as Cincinnatus, Regulus, and the Scipios, how important to nurture our children upon the strong and sinewy example of Washington, Robertson, Champlain, and Fremont. For moral-educative purposes, there is no history so valuable as the biographies of our sturdy pioneers.

In the use of these stories we follow no strict chronological order, but select according to the

simplicity and interest of the story, and from the best pioneer biographies of our own and of surrounding states. We have divided these stories into *two series*: *first*, those illustrating the early history and exploration of different sections of the Mississippi valley; *second*, narratives of the lives of New England and other eastern states, together with two or three stories of California and the extreme west, and the biographies of four or five of the great ocean navigators.

For those children living in the Mississippi valley, it will be natural and appropriate to make use of the stories belonging to that region; that is, the *first series*, in the fourth grade. In the fifth grade, the *second series* will extend and complete the great pioneer epoch of our history.

### FIRST SERIES.

#### Stories of the Mississippi Valley for Fourth Grade.

1. *Lincoln*.—Early life and surroundings in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. Poor farm boy. Going down the Mississippi in a flat-boat. Reading and study. The Black Hawk War.

2. *Joliet and Marquette*.—First discovery of the Upper Mississippi and journey upon it. Marquette and the Illinois Indians.

3. *La Salle*.—Settlement at La Chine. Expedition to Fort Frontinac, Niagara. The building of the Griffin and its trip up the lakes. From St.

Joseph to the Illinois and Peoria. The fur-trade. War in Illinois. The confederacy.

4. *Hennepin*.—Exploration of the Upper Mississippi. Capture of Hennepin by the warlike Sioux. His hardships and escape.

5. *George Rogers Clark*.—Life among the Kentucky backwoodsmen. Indian outrages from the northwest. Plan to capture Kaskaskia and Vincennes. Descent of the Ohio from Pittsburg with a small army. Hardship and energy. Capture of Kaskaskia. Treating with the Indians. Capture of Vincennes.

6. *Boone*.—Crossing the mountains from North Carolina. Laying out a road. Boonesborough. Capture by the Indians. Life among them and escape. The defense of Boonesborough. Simon Kenton, the friend of Boone.

7. *Robertson*.—Settlement at Watauga. Visit to hostile Indians. Overland journey to the Cumberland. Journey in boats down the Tennessee and up the Cumberland to Nashville. Dangers and exploits.

8. *Marietta and Cincinnati*.—First pioneers across the Alleghanies and down the Ohio. The fort at Marietta. First settlers of Cincinnati. Troubles with the Indians.

9. *The Sioux Massacre*.—Bad treatment of Indians by the whites. Indian secrecy and revenge. Flight of fugitives from the Minnesota valley. Punishment of the Indians.

10. *Lewis and Clark*.—Voyage up the Missouri river. Crossing of the Rocky Mountains and return.

11. *Fremont*.—Fort Laramie. South Pass. Climbing Fremont's Peak. Passing the Canon of the Platte.

12. *La Salle*.—Voyage to the mouth of the Mississippi and return. Fort St. Louis on Starved Rock. Voyage from France and death.

13. *De Soto*.—Voyage from Cuba. Capture of an Indian village. Wading the swamps. Fights with the Indians. Discovery of the Mississippi. Wanderings west of it. Death.

## SECOND SERIES.

1. *Columbus*.—Youth. Study of maps and charts. Before the courts of Spain and Portugal. First voyage. His disappointments.

2. *Magellan*.—Journey round the world.

3. *Henry Hudson*.—Voyages. Trip up the Hudson.

4. *Raleigh*.—Early life. Attempts to settle Virginia. Imprisonment and death.

5. *Drake*.—Voyage of plunder. In California. Crossing the Pacific. Reception at home.

6. *Champlain*.—Explorations. The Iroquois.

7. *John Smith*.—Exploring Virginia. Capture and adventures with the Indians. Smith as governor.

8. *William Penn.*—Becoming a Quaker. Plans of settlement. Treatment of Indians.

9. *Peter Stuyvesant.*—Governor of New York.

10. *James Oglethorpe.*—Prisoners for debt. Governor of Georgia.

11. *The First Lord Baltimore.*—Persecution of Catholics.

12. *Washington.*—Early life up to Braddock's defeat.

13. *Fremont.*—Exploring Salt Lake and the Great Basin. Crossing the Sierra Nevada in winter.

14. Crossing the plains and mountains to California in '79.

15. Pilgrims and Puritans.

In departing so widely from usage as to make regular instruction in historical topics a part of the school work from the fourth grade on, we assume the value of historical studies in general. Their value for instruction and for morals was discussed in the "General Method." But we now feel called upon to justify this choice of materials from our own history for fourth and fifth grades.

*In the first case*, does this part of our history furnish materials that are adapted to the understanding and interest of children of this grade? We are all aware that biography is the most interesting form of history, especially for children. Now that kind of biography that appeals most strongly to children of from ten to twelve years is that



which is cast in the *heroic mold*. Not the lives of orators, scientists, or even of statesmen, but of simple *heroes*, of men who have shown power and skill and goodness in an age when men battled single-handed or in small numbers against surrounding dangers.

So far as the schools are concerned, the fact has been too much overlooked that we have in our own history a *heroic epoch* of surprising interest. A collection of the best pioneer biographies of our country would be remarkably rich in stirring events, in deeds of fortitude and nobility which are destined to thrill the future with their moral worth. Many of the best episodes of our history are as yet entirely unknown to our children; for example, the watchfulness and resource of Robertson during the Indian troubles about Nashville and the boldness of George Rogers Clark at Kaskaskia and Vincennes. These stories are simple, biographical, interesting, and true to life. There is an era in child life where they take to the pioneer stories. At this time these stirring, true stories of strong men and women, of difficult enterprises, are able to awaken the deep and permanent interest of children. For they have the ring of true metal in them that will pass current with all men in all ages. Our history, which is so rich in inspiring educative materials, has consisted too much, heretofore, in the study of skeleton outlines, in a memorizing of important events and of chron-

ological tables. This has often tended to dull the interest in history or even to create a distaste for it. There is no reason why children in their earlier years should not come in contact, not with a barren statement of important facts, but with the personal deeds of men of energy and virtue. They see these men in action and are strongly stimulated by their conduct. The pioneer stories approach our history from its most attractive side, presenting detailed biographical pictures. They not only interest for the time being, but create an inclination toward the study of our leading men and of important events in the formative period of our history.

History stories have been introduced into our schools in recent years, but they are usually too brief and didactic. A good story should claim a child's interest from its own inherent merit. By beginning early with detailed and interesting biographies, we touch the heart of the child. In the regular teaching of history the tendency has been overwhelming toward a condensed statement of the great events of our national life. There has been much faith in the power of the mind to assimilate the generalizations boiled down into our brief compendiums of history. Even the children's histories, in biographical form, have been more anxious to load up with important facts than to tell a good story. We have much to learn in teaching history to children. It is no more true here

than in natural science that the mind can dispense with the concrete, interesting facts, the details from which general statements, have been inferred. By taking history in its simple biographical details we shall gather the best materials and insure a strong interest.

*In the second place*, besides securing a strong and lasting interest, they are *instructive* in a double sense. The study of pioneer life in these concrete forms throws into dark relief the *difficulties* in a primitive society of overcoming the obstacles in nature. In our present condition of society it is difficult for us to realize what toil and effort have been expended in securing our common blessings, *e. g.*, roads and bridges, tools and machines, houses and schools, security from violence. Pioneer life reveals with great distinctness the intense difficulties which beset men in the earliest stages of that growth upward into our present civilization when the most necessary things, as food, ammunition, medicine, and tools, were very hard to obtain. Many of the children, even of the common people, have such an easy abundance of all good things that they do not dream of the toil that these things cost. With the growth of city population and luxury, with hundreds of boys and girls whose sole aim is amusement, it is well to return in thought at least to the simple, primitive hardships of our grandparents.

We desire also to secure an appreciative in-

sight into the social, economic, and political society in which we now live. Children cannot understand this in its present complexity. Going back, however, to a simple social state, they may more easily see the chief elements. One of the greatest lessons of history is to discover how, out of simple early conditions, step by step, our present society and government have grown. There is no place where the simple foundations upon which the Americans have built their institutions are seen with such clearness as in pioneer life. It is one of the important aims of education to secure an appreciative understanding of the complex world in which we find ourselves. We study and observe the present, but it is in the past that we find the key to its interpretation.

While this kind of pioneer history does not aim to give us a comprehensive view of the great events and movements in our national life, it does present, with great distinctness, a few important events that have had a formative influence upon all our later history, *e. g.*, the efforts of the French to get possession of the St. Lawrence and of the Mississippi valley; later, the conflict between the British and the Kentuckians for the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, the claims based upon the discoveries and explorations of the ocean pioneers, Columbus, Raleigh, Hudson, etc. Again, the important Indian tribes and confederacies are distinctively given, and their influence upon the trend

of settlement. Some of the great characters of our annals, about which the memory loves to linger, men who stood for great and lasting achievements, are not only clearly pointed out, but illustrated with sufficient detail as to give the colors of real life.

This leads us to our *third point*. Is the *moral* benefit of a proper teaching of these materials clear and positive? Simply to name a few of the men is almost sufficient answer. Columbus, Raleigh, La Salle, Penn, Marquette, Washington, Lincoln. The deeds and character which these names suggest are what we desire to see emulated among the youth. As a means of moral education, the history of pioneer life is offered with great confidence. Moral impulses and dispositions are cultivated by giving the ripening mind of the child a chance to admire and approve right actions in others. These biographies are designed, in short, as a series of object lessons in character and morals. In studying the lives of men we pass moral judgments, and pass them with fervor. The feelings and incentives aroused (especially if their daily practical bearings are kept in mind) pass over into moral convictions which influence our later actions. By a good selection of intrinsically valuable history stories, which create a strong personal interest, it is possible, under good instruction, to exert a direct moral influence in the formation of character in pupils.

**METHOD OF TREATING HISTORY STORIES IN FOURTH  
AND FIFTH GRADES—ORAL PRESENTA-  
TION AND ITS VALUE.**

Let it be assumed that we have found out what parts of American biography and history are best suited to instruct and stimulate children in these grades. We are to consider next in what manner the children may best get at and appreciate these stories. Would it be possible to leave them entirely to the home and extra-school occupations of the pupils? Are they likely, without school aid, to find the choicest episodes in our history; and, having found them, will they, unaided, get into the life and spirit of the men about whom they read? Or, again, supposing that these materials are furnished to children in supplementary readers, or even in school histories, to be learned and recited, can we count upon the right kind of results? First, there are very few books touching American biography or history which can be easily read by the children of the fourth and fifth grades. Their average reading capacity is considerably limited. They can understand many things presented to them orally which they would appropriate with difficulty in a printed form. Their power to think, reason, and understand is much greater than their readiness to grasp thought from the printed page. It is certainly desirable to induce children to read biography and history and to cultivate a taste for them as soon as they have the

ability and inclination. But average children do not drink much from this fountain unless they have acquired some taste for its waters. The oral treatment of these stories, when the personal interest, energy, and skill of the teacher give the facts and scenes an almost real and tangible form—this oral treatment is the thing and the only thing to give a child the best start in historical study. There are doubtless a few bright children in every school who will browse for themselves if only the suitable books are put before them, but even these brighter minds are apt to become slovenly readers if left without training in the power to realize and objectify the things read. We have in mind, however, not the exceptional few, but the great body of school children, and wish to determine what history can do to strengthen their characters and stir up vigorous thought.

A story becomes more graphic, interesting, realistic, in the hands of a good teacher. Not only are his descriptions more animated, picturesque, colloquial, adapting themselves to the faces, moods, and varied thoughts and suggestions of the pupils, but there can be a discussion of causes by pupils and teacher, a weighing of probabilities, a use of the blackboard for graphic drawing or diagram, a variety of homely illustrations, an appeal to the children's previous experience and reading such as is impossible in the mere memorizing of a book.

No author, however talented or fertile in language, can supply what the interest, resource, and skill of a good teacher bring to the recitation. Any doubts on the part of pupils can be solved, any misconceptions corrected, when the pupils take up the oral reproduction of the stories.

Where geography is involved, maps and sketches can be discussed in such a vivid and casual way as to make the situation and the difficulties clear to the eye. Where persons and scenes are presented, pictures may often greatly aid the verbal descriptions. Comparisons with home objects, in regard to size or resemblance in form, give greater precision and reality to the thought products.

In history the *oral presentation* largely takes the place of the *object* in natural science studies. We desire to draw so near to historical persons, scenes, or occasions as to stand in their presence, to so exercise the imagination as to become the eye-witnesses of the facts. It is impossible to reproduce history except through the imagination.

When a person has read a play of Shakespeare under the suggestion and stimulus of a thoughtful admirer of the great poet, he will read all other plays with improved judgment and appreciation. When a child has learned how to interpret one history story through the aid of an enthusiastic teacher, he will read other history stories with better understanding. A course of oral lessons in



a series of American history episodes and biographies is a preparation for a later study of history in a double sense. A keen and abiding interest is awakened in a few of our stanchest men. A deeper and more practical realization of the difficulties and hardships of these men and of their physical environment is secured. If we are to realize the significance of history and of men's conduct as there expressed, we must see and feel their dangers, trials, and physical limitations. The simple memorizing of facts and descriptions from text-books manifestly falls far short of true history study. How far a good teacher may supplement, criticise, and energize the facts of a text-book so as to give them actuality may be fairly asked. But even before any text-book is or can be used, we may get at the soul of the matter through a direct personal presentation of stories by the teacher and in the midst of a running fire of questions, suggestion, and reasoning at causes which both stimulate interest and thought, and give a strong tone of reality to the events discussed.

#### THE METHOD OF ORAL PRESENTATION.

We have called for a vivid and realistic presentation of a narrative and its setting by the teacher.

In one sense this is a heavy demand upon teachers, and one to which they are not much accustomed to respond. Skill, facility, and tact in

this line of exertion are acquired by most teachers slowly. It seems, however, to be a misapprehension to suppose that only the gifted few are capable of this kind of success. Those who are slow and halting in speech, or who have no "gift of gab," may be eminently successful. In truth, one of the first and most important requirements of a teacher in successful story telling, is to hold his tongue. He must, however, acquire skill in making facts and situations vivid to children. He must possess the magic wand which touches their imaginations so that they construct pictures that approximate the distinctness of reality. First, the teacher himself must possess feeling and imagination; he must see things with great distinctness and detail and he must find homely phrases, striking or amusing analogies, gestures, and facial expression. Graphic sketches and outlines on the blackboard must be at his disposal. He must learn to exercise all his faculties with great freedom before a class. He must be quick in sympathy and ready to interpret a child's question or remarks. The previous knowledge of children, their home experiences, as well as facts remembered from books, must be called out in elucidation of the topic under discussion. But it is necessary to use these materials without allowing either teacher or pupils to be drawn aside from the main topic. The intelligent judgment and self-activity of pupils should be exercised at every turn in the story.

They are stimulated by questions as to facts, causes, probable sequence, reasons.

A particular kind of preparation for such oral lessons rendered obligatory by the whole character of the work is the clear and definite arrangement of the story into a *series of topics*. It is not sufficient to read the story through carefully so as to get a clear sequence of events and a memory for the facts. The teacher's mind should cast the story into a series of unities or topics, each of which has a nucleus or center with a body of related facts which find their cause and explanation in this center. Each topic is projected as a unit in the mind of the teacher. It should be an essential link in a chain of important sequences. In the recitation each topic should be mastered before proceeding to what follows. As each topic is presented by the teacher and reproduced by the pupil, a brief outline may be kept on the board of the topics discussed, and this outline becomes the basis of all reproductions after the whole subject has been presented.

This power to get at the essential segments, or the pivotal points in a story is an excellent logical training for the teacher. He must see a series of events in their essential aspects, in their casual relation, and in their relative importance. Such a careful analysis of a story into clearly distinct topics calls for a thoughtful digestion of the materials, which goes far toward a pedagogical

mastery of a subject for teaching purposes. A teacher must learn to be thoughtful, logical, and clear-headed.

But if the teacher has learned to think sensibly and to organize his lesson into prominent headings which will stand a close logical test, it is clear that the children will be trained into logical and rational modes of thinking and study. Children will learn to do more than simply memorize. They learn to estimate and judge the value of the points discussed, to discriminate between the important and secondary facts, to notice the proper relations and groupings of facts.

This *series of topics* upon which we have laid such stress should be expressed on the blackboard in the form of suitable words, phrases, or short sentences. After a topic has been fully presented by a teacher, it is often well to ask the children for a brief phrase which suggests the gist of the matter. Some expression furnished by the pupils may serve for the heading, or it may be modified, to give a more definite and exact form.

#### THE REPRODUCTION BY THE PUPILS.

When the teacher has done his full duty in a vigorous and clear presentation of the facts in a topic, his next duty lies in devolving the work of reproduction upon the children. It is for the pupils now to show how attentive they have been, and how fully they can recall and express the

ideas already presented. Let the teacher firmly decline to do the pupil's part of the work. Let him not pump answers from the children. The briefest possible questions or corrections or checks or signs of approval are all that is needed. Brevity and silence are the teacher's chief merits at this stage of the work.

The topic should generally be reproduced more than once; at first, perhaps, by one of the readier pupils, and then by two or three others. The children's reproductions will show misconceptions that must be corrected by other pupils or by the teacher. Still further explanations may be given by the teacher after the child's work is finished. We can not be satisfied with anything short of a thorough appropriation of the facts as at first presented. It will pay to stick to one topic till the victory is complete. The children have no books to study, and if they ever get the facts they must do it now. The welding must take place while the iron is hot or it will never be done. Close attention is indispensable in this work, and if it can be first secured by the teacher in the class-room, its effects will be felt in their home and private studies. If children dawdle when studying at home, it is partially because they are allowed to dawdle during recitations at school.

One of the incidental advantages that spring from oral presentation and reproduction of history

stories is a straightforward, forcible use of good English. But many corrections of faulty words and phrases are made necessary. These corrections may be made quietly by the teacher without seriously interrupting the pupil's course of thought. Our primary aim, however, is not language drill, but the culture that lies in history.

After a series of topics has been worked out with alternate presentation and reproduction; it is in place to call for a full narration of the whole subject by one or more pupils. The brief outline on the board ought to be sufficient to guide the pupil without questions from the instructor. Success in this reproduction is a final test of the mastery of the story. The topics presented one day, however, should be reviewed the next by the students, and this repetition continued till the mastery is felt to be satisfactory.

The children should keep a *blank book*, such as an ordinary composition book, into which the outlines developed may be copied by the children once or twice a week. It should be done in ink, with great neatness and care, and these outlines may serve well, at the close of the term, for the final review and reproduction.

#### DIFFICULTIES.

There are several difficulties in the way of satisfactory **oral** work of the kind described which prevent **practical** teachers from undertaking it:

1. In the training of our teachers not much care is taken to acquire the ability to *present a subject well* to a class. It is an art difficult to acquire in many cases and not generally regarded as valuable. The function of the teacher has been found in *assigning* and *testing* rather than in the *presentation* of knowledge.

The idea that children are to do everything for themselves through their own activity, has been brought in successfully to support our common method of recitation. The ridicule heaped upon the "pouring in" and "drawing out" process has also confirmed us in the belief that our common recitation method is, after all, the best.

An oral method of teaching is liable to great abuses, because it is really a difficult art. But it is reasonable for us to raise the question whether a teacher, in declining to treat certain subjects orally which are best adapted to it, is not consulting his convenience and laziness rather than the rules of his art. If a teacher does not know a subject well enough to present it in a clear and interesting way to his class, he does not know it as well as a teacher should. He has not thoroughly assimilated it and organized it in his own mind. The teacher who is called upon to *present* a lesson to a class will master it in a more effective way than the mere hearer of recitations. He will also seek to adapt his facts to the minds of the class and make them interesting by means of

drawings or illustrations and other devices. It is an admitted fact that children in our intermediate and grammar grades in town schools have very little self-reliance or thoughtfulness. They are overwhelmingly inclined to mechanical methods of work, memorizing phrases in arithmetic, geography, and grammar. After an infinite amount of talking about *self-reliance* and *self-activity*, children become neither self-reliant nor self-active. Such terms as self-activity and self-reliance may be bandied about among teachers forever but they will not save us from the inherent weaknesses of mechanical methods in teaching. What we need is more energy, spirit, and interest in the subjects, both among teachers and pupils. Will good oral teaching help us in this respect? There is some danger that our ideal of a teacher will be lowered by constantly thinking of him as a drill master, a hearer of recitations, a tester of acquired facts. The best thing a teacher can do is to *stimulate*. If his own mind is awake and aglow with the ideas he is discussing or presenting, the children's thoughts will kindle. If it is possible to put such safeguards around oral teaching as will keep it from degenerating into *talk*, we shall find it a means of stimulus.

Clear, vivid, animated presentation of ideas to a class, though difficult, is an excellent aim for teachers to keep in view, because it will regenerate their school activity. There are, of course,



a good many lessons in arithmetic, grammar, and reading that must be learned from text-books. To these our remarks apply but indirectly. In geography, history, language, and natural science there are lessons in plenty that call for oral treatment, where pupil and teacher come face to face in the discussion of facts.

The real genesis of self-activity and power to think should be found in these oral lessons where the instructor can adapt his explanations and questions to the individuals of his class. This is the best place to find out what is in a boy, and to bring out all the facts of his experience in the search for causes.

2. Oral teaching calls for close and constant *attention* from all members of a class. The habit of inattention formed in our schools reveals one of the most *vulnerable points* in our school method. There is a striking difference between American and European schools of the better sort, in this respect.

An exclusive *text-book method* of studying and teaching *undermines* attention in the class-room. The strongest attention is required in learning the lesson before the recitation, but the class period is characterized by general looseness, except for each particular child when called up to recite.

An oral method of teaching is based fundamentally upon *attention*. The facts must be acquired in the class, or not at all. The habits of

attention formed at school will also strengthen the children in home study and initiate them into the right method of attention and study. In reply to all this, it may be truly said that a vigorous teacher will secure attention whether teaching orally or from a text-book. However true this may be, there is a natural tendency to laxity in a text-book method, while the necessity for close attention is much more apparent in an oral presentation and treatment.

3. It is difficult to get teachers to properly *organize an oral lesson into topics*, to hold a clear, logical outline of points, and to make this outline the basis for reproductions and later reviews. They forget to fix the chief points or topics as they go. They get over the ground, but neglect to stake it off as they go, and both teacher and pupils become muddled. Without a clear succession of distinct topics in oral lessons, the work becomes hazy and scattering and the results must be unsatisfactory. Such an outline is indispensable if oral lessons are to be logical, clear, and of permanent value.

4. Time is wanting for such oral recitations in our present school programs. But programs can be modified. We have general lessons before the whole school, where such a plan is already used. In teaching natural science, we are now compelled to admit that the text-book work is unsatisfactory. Studies like science and history,

in the intermediate and grammar grades, should not take full time five periods a week, but should alternate. Classes can be combined for oral work in natural science, history, and geography.

The general tendency of oral teaching is to leave less time for study during school hours, and this must be provided for.

5. One of the chief difficulties that stands in the way of good oral teaching is the *lack of materials* such as a teacher can use for oral presentations.

The moment a teacher begins to treat a subject orally, he calls for *more abundant* and *detailed materials* on those topics than our text-books furnish. In geography, history, and natural science he goes on a skirmish for facts that have more meaning than the barren statements in our texts.

This is true in the history stories. We need fuller and more detailed accounts of our leading pioneers. Quite a number of books containing history stories for children have been published of late, but most of them are too meager. They are too much in bondage to the old text-book idea that it is a few leading facts that we want instead of pictures of men and of the times taken from life.

These are some of the difficulties and prejudicial customs that stand in the way of oral teaching.

There are other inherent objections that are emphasized by our experience. Oral teaching has been looked upon as one of the fads. It had its day, ran its course, and passed away with its mistakes. It brought some life and enthusiasm into school work, but was barren of results. It wasted time in fruitless discussions. All this is only too true, and if oral teaching were now introduced among us on a large scale, it would not prove satisfactory. The chief difficulty lies in the fact that the great majority of teachers are poorly equipped for their work. They do not know enough of their subjects, and their knowledge is not organized so as to be brought into presentable shape. A good text-book is a godsend to a poorly equipped teacher.

But there is a growing class of teachers who believe in their profession and are giving it their best energy for life. Oral teaching offers to such a ladder by which they may climb up to higher professional efficiency and success.

There is also at present a strong drift toward oral teaching in literature and natural science. All experts are now fairly well agreed that children can not get their knowledge of plants, animals, and natural phenomena from books. Observation, experiment, and oral discussion are the only available avenues of approach to the natural sciences. If these subjects are ever properly taught in our schools it must be done without

text-books, letting teacher and children stand face to face with the facts.

Parallel with the effort to introduce natural science is the effort to get our best literature into the lower and intermediate grades. But first grade children can not read fables and fairy stories; they must hear them. Robinson Crusoe in the second grade, and mythical stories in the third, are best presented by the living voice of the teacher. There is no such vivid way of getting the best classical myths and historical stories before children in the intermediate grades as by oral presentation.

## BOOKS FOR FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADES.

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*Pioneer History Stories*, McMurry. Stories of the Mississippi Valley; First Series. Second edition. Price, 50 cents. Public-School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Ill.

*The Making of the Great West*, Drake. It deals with pioneer history west of the Mississippi. Published by Charles Scribner & Sons. Price, \$1.75.

### STORIES OF THE EAST.

*The Making of New England*, Drake. Early discoverers and explorers of New England. Published by Charles Scribner & Sons. Price, \$1.50.

*Young Folks' Book of American Explorers*. Interesting and full of excellent material. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston. Price, \$1.50.

*Pilgrims and Puritans*, Moore. Excellent description of the first years in Massachusetts. Published by Ginn & Co. Price, 60 cents.

*Historical Classic Readings*. Ten pamphlets of 60 pages each. Some of them deal with the pioneers, others with later episodes in our history. Published by Effingham Maynard, N. Y.

## HISTORY IN THE SIXTH GRADE.

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The time given to American history in the sixth grade may be limited to two or three hours a week and should be centered upon a few striking phases of the colonial epoch up to the close of the last great French and Indian War. It will be better to take four or five of the leading states and study them closely than to spend the same time upon all the thirteen. A full and picturesque account of the characteristic episodes of a few colonies will produce much better interest and insight into our early history than the effort to stretch one drag-net over all the colonies and gather in every important event. We need to pay more attention to the sympathetic and graphic elements in our history. We must get far enough into the daily lives and struggles of the colonists to feel as they felt, to appreciate their desires and hardships, and to forget our present surroundings. It is well also to keep to the shady, inviting biographical walks, where personal actions and interests serve to typify and illustrate the life of communities. It is easier to approach larger social and political affairs through the lives of individuals than to generalize about institutions and modes of life.

A complete life of Benjamin Franklin may accompany the study of this epoch. His autobiography, as adapted to schools by Ginn & Co., will serve our purpose. His life is contemporaneous with a good part of the colonial epoch and his personal affairs are of importance to Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, and to the colonies as a whole. His life is in many respects very suitable for children to study. His plain good sense, his economy and simplicity, his energy and public spirit, are excellent, and stimulate children to self-improvement and love of knowledge.

The work of the sixth grade is essentially to observe the growth of small and weak settlements into strong and vigorous commonwealths, with waxing commercial, economical, and political interests. But it is pedagogical to approach the life of communities through the knowledge of their typical representatives and leaders. Children of this grade are not yet old enough to understand or to interest themselves much in purely political and social organization and its development. It is safer to let the panorama of history unroll before them in a few important typical scenes, with occasional strong glimpses of the underlying forces which are formulating themselves into the institutions of freedom. In working up to a clear view of the leading political and other ideas that were hammered out into consistency and strength during the colonial epoch, we



should keep in sight a strong foreground of dramatic incident and of biographical detail. These furnish the concrete materials behind which children can detect and trace up the moving causes. While our chief purpose in this grade is to bring out political and social ideas, the lives of such men as Roger Williams, King Philip, Otis, Andros, Vane, Frontenac, Wolfe, and Montcalm still stand out clearly at important crises and exemplify the chief influences at work.

This close study of colonial men and women in the forms of self-government they set up, in their family, religious and social life, in the trying circumstances of famine or Indian outrage—is the only means of understanding their spirit when greater struggles, as the Revolution, come on. The independent, self-reliant spirit of the Americans in the northern, middle, and southern colonies should be seen in its unvarnished strength, as prominently brought out in the dealings with royal governors, with kings and parliaments, as well as in the laborious and dangerous work of exploration and settlement. So simple is the environment of the early colonies that, if approached from the concrete side, sixth grade children can appreciate not only the temper of the people, but their methods of local government, and the first steps toward the establishment of the representative system. The growth of the legislature in influence and its gradual division into two distinct

bodies are of much value to an understanding of state history and of later national politics.

The acts of royal governors may be closely examined as showing wisdom and prudence, or tyranny and selfishness. The prerogatives assumed by royal governors and the rights claimed by the people kept the two parties in almost constant conflict and gave a vigorous schooling in both theoretical and practical politics. This study is an excellent training for young Americans because of its direct moral example and warning, and as a preparation for the exercise of political rights in later years, in judging public questions and candidates for office. The comparison of the political life and constitutions of different colonies is of much interest and leads to some striking discoveries of general laws. For example, in spite of noticeable differences in religion, race, and social life, the colonies seem to develop strikingly similar tendencies toward independent self-government. They develop the same self-reliance, the same sturdy, manly independence, and the same opposition to the encroachments of authority in the northern, middle, and southern colonies.

The peculiar industrial conditions and occupations, the social practices and habits of living in each important colony, may be grasped from vivid life-like portrayal by our best historians. The contrasts between the different settlements

in these respects bring out fundamental differences which have lain at the root of the most difficult problems of our later history. Aristocracy, slavery, and plantation life in the South; the trades, fisheries, ship-building, and small-farm proprietors in the North, are a few of the deep-lying causes in our history.

The attachment to the local state government is very strong. State sovereignty is the strongest political idea. It is well for children to feel keenly the attachment of the Puritan for his New England life, town meeting, church, and Yankee prejudices. It is well to measure the strength of his confidence in the local colonial government and the causes for it. But a broader sympathy and allegiance is demanded of him and it is only slowly that he feels the necessity and justice of intercolonial interest and helpfulness. The larger relations of the colonies to each other and to the Indians and to the French lead up to the idea of political life and patriotism in a broader sense. It is important to trace the growth of this sentiment through the colonial period. The natural growth of the country makes union a necessity, but in many respects the states appear to grow antagonistic to each other. In all our later epochs these two great forces, centripetal and centrifugal, have been formative in their influence upon our institutions. Our constitution is found later to be an instrument to put in balance these two active tendencies.

The story of the great conflict between France and the English-Americans for supremacy in North America is the most dramatic phase of this whole period. The episode of the great conflict between the French and the Six Nations is preliminary to this and of great interest as exhibiting the Indians at their strongest and best. Children of the sixth grade can respond with a lively interest to the campaign of the last French and Indian war. When Pitt finally assumed control and Wolfe and Montcalm enter upon that energetic contest, we have an exhibition of high spirit and enterprise on both sides, in an inevitable contest whose result was vital to the whole trend of our later history.

In the sixth grade we should be able to begin in an effective way to trace the causes and results of historical events, to discover their necessary sequence. The different parties and forces should be examined in their nature and tendencies. The geographical and climatic conditions, the race characteristics, and the previous disposition and history of the different peoples, should be measured as influences leading to certain results.

Nothing is able to stir up more enthusiasm in a class and to throw them upon the exercise of their own thinking power to better advantage than to search out and reason out the causes of important events and institutions. By limiting

our study to a few of the salient topics of the colonial time, it is possible to go deeper into causal conditions. An event can be examined in its many-sided relations. And the tracing of those relations ties up the related facts in such firm association that a clear understanding and a retentive remembrance are assured. As topics specially worthy of such causal study, consider King Philip's War, the navigation acts of England, the jealousies between New York and New England, the attitude of the Six Nations toward the French, Bacon's rebellion, and the defeat of the French in 1760.

Our general purpose for the history of the grades provides that any important epoch shall be studied fully *but once*, and that each succeeding year shall lead on into new and later historical fields. Heretofore the school plan for history has been to review, from year to year, the same epochs and to enlarge upon them into their deeper significance in the higher grades. We are opposed to the *concentric circles* as applied to history as well as to other studies. In the sixth grade we wish to do our duty by the colonial period so that these children will not need to return a second time to a like exhaustive study of the same topics. By way of comparison, to be sure, in tracing back causal relations, and in such incidental review, they will be expected to return again and again, in later grades, to these familiar fields of former study.

They will thus get new light and sift out a stronger meaning from old events, but the main work of each year is centered upon a later theme. It is well worth our effort to try to select historical periods which children can fairly understand, and lead them on, each succeeding year, into a new field, somewhat more complex, but still within their reasonable grasp.

In history, geographical conditions must be constantly studied. Structure, climate, productions, and natural advantages have a much stronger influence than we are inclined to recognize. Both teacher and pupils should make free use of outline sketches in marking out campaigns, disputed territories, the plans of cities and forts, and routes of communication. The geography lessons of the fifth and sixth grades will aid greatly in a better appreciation of historical events both in Europe and America.

Closely related to the history of the colonies are some of our best American literary products. Evangeline, Miles Standish, the orations of Everett and Webster at Plymouth, Hawthorne's Grandfather's Chair, Irving's Sketch Book, and Knickerbocker History, Autobiography of Franklin, Irving's Life of Washington, and many smaller poems, are of great merit. The history will not deal with these literary materials, but it is important to observe how close is the relation between the study of history and the best literary

products suitable for reading lessons in this grade. Much has been already done in some schools toward introducing our own classic literature into school, but it should be accomplished more fully and systematically.

In the sixth grade, children should begin to acquire ability in using books, in collecting and arranging facts on a given topic. Certain books can be put into their hands to be studied as texts, others are rather to be used as reference. The teacher, in assigning the lesson, should give explicit directions as to how to use books of reference. To assign historical topics without definite instruction as to books and parts of books, is a misuse of children's time. It is as important to learn how to use books as it is to get their contents. The discussion of previously assigned topics in the class may be made of such a character as to bring the various facts and judgments into relation. It is here that causal relations should be seen and the proper sequence worked out, the relative importance of events judged. There are also many places in the sixth grade where the teacher, from a fuller knowledge and a riper experience, can afford to present a topic in clear and vivid form, with a re-statement of it from the children.

We are justified at this juncture in insisting upon the teacher's deeper knowledge of the colonial period. He should have read a number of

books which the children could not be expected to use. The large histories should be in part, at least, familiar to him. The biographies of the Statesmen's series, the Commonwealth series of State histories, Parkman's narratives of the French regime, John Fiske's books on New England, so far as they relate to colonial times, are exceedingly interesting and inspiring to a teacher. They cannot all be read at once, but from time to time, and in leisure hours, these intensely interesting books will be found to greatly stimulate a teacher without burdening him. The knowledge thus acquired is of course a reserve fund to be drawn upon, here and there, as occasion may require; not a collective mass of learning with which to flood the children and waste their time.

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## BOOKS FOR SIXTH GRADE.

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*The Beginnings of New England*, Fiske. A study of the Puritan character. Published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Price, \$2.00.

*Ridpath's Popular History of the U. S.* The larger volume contains interesting accounts of colonial history. Published by Jones Brothers & Co.

The best state histories are of much value



The *Commonwealth Series* of state histories contain much interesting matter to select from.

*Parkman's Wolfe and Montcalm.* Also, *Conspiracy of Pontiac.* Published by Little, Brown & Co.

*Epochs of American History — The Colonies,* Thwaites. A good, brief history with full lists of reference. Published by Longmans, Green & Co., New York.

Bancroft and Hildreth's general histories may be used by teachers to much advantage.

*Franklin, His Life by Himself,* Montgomery. Ginn & Co.

## HISTORY IN THE SEVENTH GRADE.

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For the seventh grade, we select the period from the close of the last French and Indian War to the adoption of the Constitution. The fifteen years from 1774 to 1789 constitute an epoch of surprising interest in American history. Much attention has always been paid in our schools to the Revolution; but we wish to render the important scenes of that epoch more vivid and impressive. This can not be done in a compendious textbook which is planned to cover, in a single year, the whole of our history from the time of the Norsemen and of Columbus to the present. Even a narrative and biographical history, supported by illustrative maps and pictures, though written in the best style of an artist, cannot accomplish this feat. To produce the right effect, American history should be distributed through all the grades from the fourth to the eighth inclusive. Those epochs should be chosen each year which have most power over the thought and interest of children and which best fit their understanding. The great purpose of a true study of our history is not to gain a barren mastery of a few leading facts, but to teach the lessons, to feel the motives

and impulses of men in the midst of stirring struggles. That age had the elements of greatness in it, a righteous cause and a mighty spirit of achievement, leaders of such integrity and forethought and spirit as the world had scarcely seen before. Why should we hurry children past these events as an express train sweeps by mile-posts and stations. They see the landscapes flit past and catch the name of an occasional station. This is not geography and it is not history. On the contrary, we can afford to stop and live among the people of a hundred twenty years ago till we know their surroundings and catch their spirit. We should sit down with them by the fireside, or in the camp, hear them argue and plead in the legislature, and travel with them long distances on horseback over bad roads.

In two ways we may gain time for the right study of this epoch. First by limiting our attention during a school year to a brief period which, however, is well suited to instruct and attract seventh grade pupils. Second, by selecting only a few of the more important and typical phases and events of even this short period for elaborate examination and detailed study. The whole purpose is to get deep into the understanding and spirit of our history rather than to spread out superficially over its whole area. We shall select a few of the chief movements and campaigns of the Revolution and enter into a full narrative of

the events clustering around these centers. The narrative should be enriched with the biographical details and with the scenery which can throw these pivotal events into a strong light. In the same way two or three of the chief stages leading up to the adoption of the constitution will be traveled over. By selecting a few central topics and by gathering the fullest and most detailed materials upon them, we shall have more fruitful results than by memorizing all the important and many unimportant events.

For example, Burgoyne's Invasion, by S. A. Drake, is a monograph of 142 pages on this one campaign. Three weeks spent upon this, that is, seven or eight lessons, would give opportunity to really study this period. The war would become a reality. The pride and high hopes of the British in setting out, the rousing of the New York and New England yeomanry, the Indian character and capacity for fighting, the splendid victory at Bennington, the stratagems on the Mohawk, the great struggle at Saratoga; all these, elaborated into their details and seen in their mutual relations, will give a much deeper insight into the spirit of the Americans, the hopes of the British, and the desire of the Indians, than can be secured from our outline histories. A single campaign, elaborately studied, is worth more, both for patriotism and for knowledge, than a dozen campaigns epitomized and memorized.

We have no desire to emphasize the bloody and destructive work of war; but if we study it at all, let us get deep impressions, not mere scratches, on the memory. A few fundamental ideas brought out with great distinctness and rooted in a ground work of well organized and related facts, will be very fruitful to a child's thought and life. The tracing of causal relations is vital to every lesson. The spirit, incentive, and hardihood of the soldiery should be appreciated. Also the qualities of the leaders in camp or in congress.

The reform called for in teaching American history is like that already adopted in physics and chemistry for high schools. The old plan was to spend a term of three months on a systematic outline of the chief topics of chemistry or physics. The plan now in the best schools is to spend three or more terms upon one of these subjects, work at it experimentally and inductively and build up a solid basis of real knowledge without much effort at scientific completeness. In history also we need to extend the instruction over a much longer school period, make it real and tangible by tracing causes and by penetrating into details of personal and political affairs, and to select important central topics whose significance is seen by comparison with lesser events and by tracing relations.

If children have had the suitable history

study in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, they will have gained a large amount of information that will be directly serviceable as they approach the controversies which ushered in the Revolution. In the one hundred fifty years of colonial history they have witnessed the powerful drift toward perfect religious and political independence in the colonists. The sturdy self reliance and bold assumption of rights by Puritans and Cavaliers have given sure tokens of what to expect if efforts at repression and tyranny are made. A paltry tea-tax is not what kindled the flame of rebellion. It is the strong conviction that Parliament is trying to impose on the colonists. Before entering upon the study of the Revolution children should gain from their previous years of instruction a knowledge of the religious sects that found a safe refuge along the Atlantic coast, of the Indian character which brought so much of weal and woe to the settlers, of the French neighbors who threatened their present peace and future expansion. An acquaintance with the representative men and women in church and state, who had guided the development of these infant commonwealths, is taken for granted.

With such insight into the character of the people in different parts of the country and into the geographical conditions which hemmed them in, children may enter intelligently upon a study of a few leading topics of the Revolutionary epoch itself, as follows:

The causes leading up to the great struggle.  
Events about Boston till the evacuation.

Retreat of Washington through New York  
and New Jersey.

Burgoyne's Invasion.

Washington at Valley Forge.

Cornwallis' campaign at the South and York-  
town.

State of money matters at the close of the war.

Growing hostility between the states.

Congress and the Articles of Confederation.

The Philadelphia Convention.

The Constitution before the people of the  
states.

Keeping in mind that the chief purpose is to  
get at the deeper meaning of a few cardinal top-  
ics of this period, we would recommend the use  
of four books as a means of securing such an in-  
terest and appreciation for these events:

Scudder's Life of Washington.

Fiske's War of Independence.

Hosmer's Life of Samuel Adams.

Fiske's Critical Period of American History.

If a teacher can secure a thoughtful reading  
and study of these four books during the year,  
and by means of other references, maps, biogra-  
phies, etc., can focus attention upon the central  
topics indicated above, he will be able to produce  
deep and serious thinking upon the problems of  
our history. The biographies of Washington and

Samuel Adams, besides the strong personal interest they awaken, are valuable because they represent so well the two prominent colonies—Virginia and Massachusetts—the Puritan and the Virginia gentleman. Samuel Adams, more than anybody else, led Massachusetts safely into and through this gigantic struggle. Washington was first of all a Virginian in heart and sympathy, but soon grew to a full American, who grasped the whole situation and rose to worthy leadership of the young nation. Fiske's *Critical Period of American History* reveals with startling distinctness the sudden dangers and responsibilities which fell upon the land just made free. Disruption and anarchy seemed to follow almost immediately upon the heels of freedom. The wisdom of our representative men was never more clearly shown than by foreseeing and avoiding the dangerous rocks toward which our country was fast drifting. The adoption of the Constitution closed this great epoch of struggle and organization.

We have yet a higher aim in devoting so much time to the Revolutionary epoch up to the adoption of the constitution. American *literature* has much to say about those events. We wish to bring the history of this epoch into hand and-glove companionship with the best American literature of this period. In the reading lessons, which are parallel with the history in seventh grade, we should read Paul Revere's Ride, Song of Marion's Men,



Under the Old Elm, Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill, Webster's Orations at Bunker Hill, Warren's address, Declaration of Independence, Speech of John Adams (Webster), Burke's Speech on the American War, Washington's Letters, Farewell Address, etc.; The Green Mountain Boys, A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party, Lexington, Old Ticonderoga, Everett's Oration on Washington, etc. The strong, true spirit of the Revolutionary patriots nowhere finds better expression than in the graphic word of the poet, which leaves a lasting impress upon young minds. It is the spirit of our best American history that we wish to see live again in the hearts and convictions of the young. In literature this spirit finds the culmination of its influence and the living and lasting form which it creates for itself. History and literature, therefore, should travel together and re-inforce each other's teaching. Reading lessons in historical masterpieces will be strongly helped by previous historical studies, and the ideas gained in history will find themselves intensified and re-inforced by the energy and imagery of poet and orator. Our aim is no less than to unite the influences of American history and American literature in setting into prominence those personal and national ideals which are the richest heritage of American culture. History furnishes the plain, crude material which literature works up into a finer fabric. The biography, history, literature, and geography of

our native land are studies powerful to stimulate our youth. On this broad, geographical theater men of high purpose and strong wills have met the great problems of history and politics and have solved them with such wisdom and energy that the world has resounded with their names and deeds. Within the last fifty years have risen in our land also half a dozen poets who have interpreted the lessons of our past history and the hopes and responsibilities of our future with such measured strength and kindling imagery that every generous youth must feel the spell and awake to the enthusiasm of patriotism. These rich sources of culture and character in our own American history and literature have been but meagerly used in the common schools. They possess untold power to impress the best ideals of country and of home upon the young.

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## BOOKS FOR SEVENTH GRADE.

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*Washington and His Country*, Fiske-Irving. It is an abbreviation of Irving's *Life of Washington*, for the use of schools; 618 pages. Ginn & Co. Price, 90 cents.

*Scudder's Life of Washington*. A clear and interesting account of the important phases of his

life, suited to interest seventh grade. Houghton & Mifflin, Riverside Library. Price, 75 cents.

*The War of Independence*, John Fiske. A good view of the Revolution for boys; 200 pages. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Price, 75 cents.

*Burgoyne's Invasion*, S. A. Drake. An excellent monograph. Lee & Shepard. Price, 50 cents.

*Life of Samuel Adams*, Hosmer, Statesmen's Series. A very stirring and lifelike description of Adams' life and influence, especially in the early stages of the Revolution. Appleton & Co.

*The Critical Period of American History*, John Fiske. Very valuable for the period between Yorktown and the adoption of the Constitution. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Price, \$2.00.

*Epochs of American History*, Formation of the Union, by Hart. Excellent for the teacher, with full list of books of reference. Longmans, Green & Co., New York.

*Half Hours with American History*, Charles Morris. Vol. II, Independent America, Chapter I on the Revolution. Extracts from the best writers on special topics of the Revolution.

## UNITED STATES HISTORY IN EIGHTH GRADE.

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In studying American history since the adoption of the constitution, eighth grade pupils will meet with many problems too difficult for them to solve. The web of our history becomes more complex and intricate. The closer they come to the present the harder it is to get an unbiased view of important questions. Eighth grade pupils are from fourteen to sixteen years of age, and not yet capable of deep and comprehensive thought on social and political affairs. But many of them are completing their education for citizenship in the common schools, and in making our national history an important culture and character study through the several years of the intermediate and grammar grades, we must decide what topics of our later history are calculated to arouse the thought and interest of eighth grade pupils.

During the four years preceding, the children should have been drawing deep and inspiring lessons from the biography and history of our earlier epochs. They have become interested in the representative leaders and in the growth of the country and of its interests. The spirit of patri-

otism has already become a conscious impulse, setting up attractive ideals to be attained by individuals and by society. This love of country and deep concern for its institutions should grow slowly and steadily, having its roots fed from the rich, concrete materials of history as detailed in biography and in the dramatic episodes of political life. It is futile to expect such fruitful results except as they spring naturally out of a rich soil well cultivated. The short hot-house methods of quickly appropriating the condensed results of our history in a single term's or year's course are thoroughly artificial and unnatural.

The expansion of our country under the constitution until it has covered the better half of a continent with Anglo-Saxon ideas of government, school, and social order, is the theme of this year's study. The gigantic growth and progress of our country in all essential elements of greatness will become a source of interest and pride. The forces which have threatened to check and mar this progress need to be seen in their hurtful and destructive influence. A few of the larger influences which have wrought such marvelous results in the last hundred years may be plainly seen and understood by eighth grade children. The more intricate problems of legislation, finance, tariff, and political maneuvering and compromise may be let alone. We suggest the following list of topics upon which to focus the chief attention:

Growth in territory.

Internal improvement.

History and extension of slavery.

Leading inventions and inventors.

Immigration.

The rise and influence of political parties.

The three departments of our government.

Our system of revenue.

Two leading campaigns of the Civil War.

Civil service reform.

Our plan of work in this grade will be similar to that in sixth and seventh grades, namely, to choose a few important centers of study and to collect about each of them a body of graphic illustrative materials, to trace the causal relations between these centers and other important subjects, and to make all the study more vivid and realistic. This more elaborate study of a few important topics allows also a wider use of references and cultivates an acquaintance with other than textbooks and the method of using them. Most historical subjects have certain dramatic and picturesque phases in which the men or forces at work are brought out in more striking relief. Such was Webster's appearance in the senate in the second speech on Foot's resolution; so the sending of the first telegraphic message; the completion of the first Pacific railway; Lincoln at Gettysburg, Grant and Lee at Appomattox. It is well to dwell upon these scenes till they

stand out in distinctive coloring. But there seems no means of rendering historical ideas so potent, so effective and contagious in their influence, as biography. We are all hero-worshippers and children more than adults. In eighth grade also it will reward us to select three of the best typical biographies and base a large share of the year's work upon their study. We suggest the three following biographies:

John Quincy Adams.

Daniel Webster.

Abraham Lincoln.

The public life of John Quincy Adams almost covers the first fifty years of the constitutional period, and while he is identified with all the important problems of those times, his leadership of the anti-slavery forces during the last seventeen years in congress, brings him close to the great struggle which culminated in 1861. Daniel Webster stands out as the chief defender of the constitution and expounder of our form of government. His early life is of much interest, and his speeches will be much read in seventh and eighth grades. Lincoln was the untried citizen, who, being placed at the head of national interests at the moment of supreme weakness and danger, calmly and patiently met the situation in the spirit of wisdom and patriotism, and the country was saved. These men will be closely studied and their positions on public questions compared

with those of other leaders. There are also several other biographies which should be looked into so far as time will permit. Hamilton, Jefferson, Calhoun, Clay, Fulton, Field, Morse, Garrison, Stephens, and Sumner. American history is surely not lacking in culture materials if we will only select the best and use it well.

It must be taken for granted that such a study of our history involves a constant consideration of the physical conditions and resources of our country. Maps, diagrams, and views are indispensable to true insight, and should be regarded as a vital part of the instruction. The previous detailed study of the geography of the United States will be of constant service in history. The natural science lessons throughout the grades will render not a small service to historical meanings. In fifth, sixth, and seventh grades, the more striking applications of physics, chemistry, geology, and astronomy to man's progress as seen in the inventions and improvements and useful products, should have been studied. One of the most remarkable things in the history of this century is the increased mastery of physical resources through scientific inventions. Agricultural implements, steamships, blast furnaces, and dynamos are but examples. By bringing science and history and geography closer together we shall greatly increase the interest and value of each. In fact, we shall see things as they are,



for in real life they are so closely and causally related to each other as to be one.

Literature also stands in that same vital relation to eighth grade history which we discussed in seventh grade. We are just beginning to realize, in its deeper meaning, that during the last fifty years six poets, besides other almost equal lights, have blessed our land. As Holmes is laid in his grave the last of them has ceased to be with us. But their influence will strengthen with the years, and especially with the young, upon whom the formative power of their glowing patriotism and humanity may well spend the full measure of its energy. In eighth grade reading lessons, and running parallel with the history, many of the following selections may be read: The Building of the ship (Longfellow). The Steamboat, Freedom our Queen, The Flower of Liberty, Union and Liberty (Holmes). Second Speech on Foote's Resolution, Speech on Hamilton, Speech in Congress on the Federal Union (Webster). The Fortune of the Republic, The Emancipation Proclamation, Abraham Lincoln (Emerson). First and Second Inaugurals, Speech at Gettysburg (Lincoln). Snow Bound, Among the Hills, Barbarie Frietchie, The Eve of Election, Brown of Ossawatimie, Massachusetts to Virginia, Centennial Hymn (Whittier). Antiquity of Freedom, The Death of Lincoln, The Death of Slavery, O Mother of a Mighty Race (Bryant). Biglow Pa-

pers, *Essay on Lincoln*, Ode Recited at Harvard, 1865 (Lowell).

These are but a part of the inspiring body of literary products to which our national life has given birth. They should be read in close conjunction with the history itself and give more feeling and intensity to every patriotic impulse suggested by the history. There is also much other literature to be read in this grade from English and American sources. We are not at all limited to historical and patriotic selections.

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## BOOKS FOR EIGHTH GRADE.

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1. *Life of John Quincy Adams*, by Morse. Adams is shown as a man of great ability, learning, and integrity. Statesmen's series. Appleton & Co. \$1.25.

2. *Daniel Webster*, by Lodge. The defender and expounder of the constitution. Statesmen's series. Appleton. \$1.25.

3. *Children's Life of Lincoln*, Putnam. A story for juveniles, with much good material.

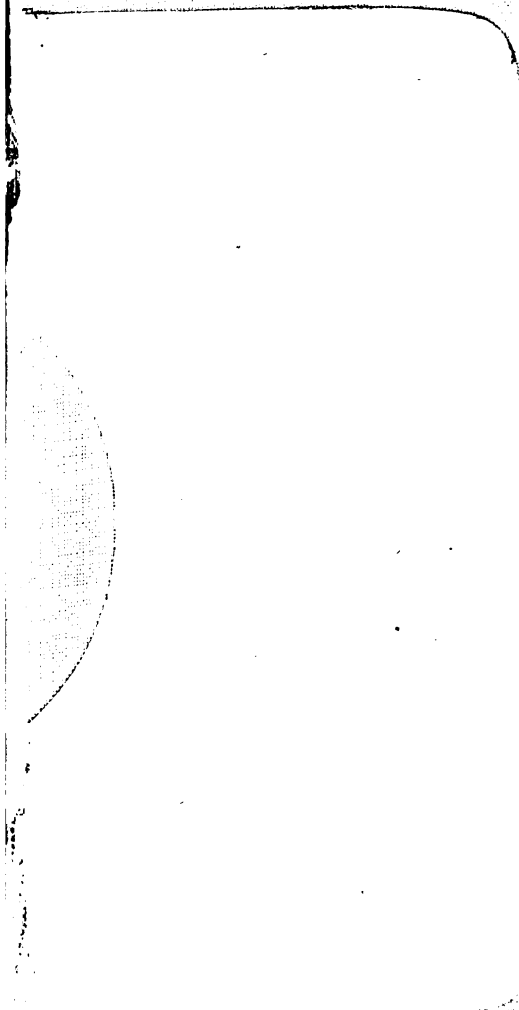
4. *Life of Lincoln*, Coffin. Large. Illustrated. A good book for the school library. A. C. McClurg & Co.

5. *Half Hours with American History*, Morris. Vol. II. Independent America. J. B. Lippincott & Co. Special topics as treated by the best writers.

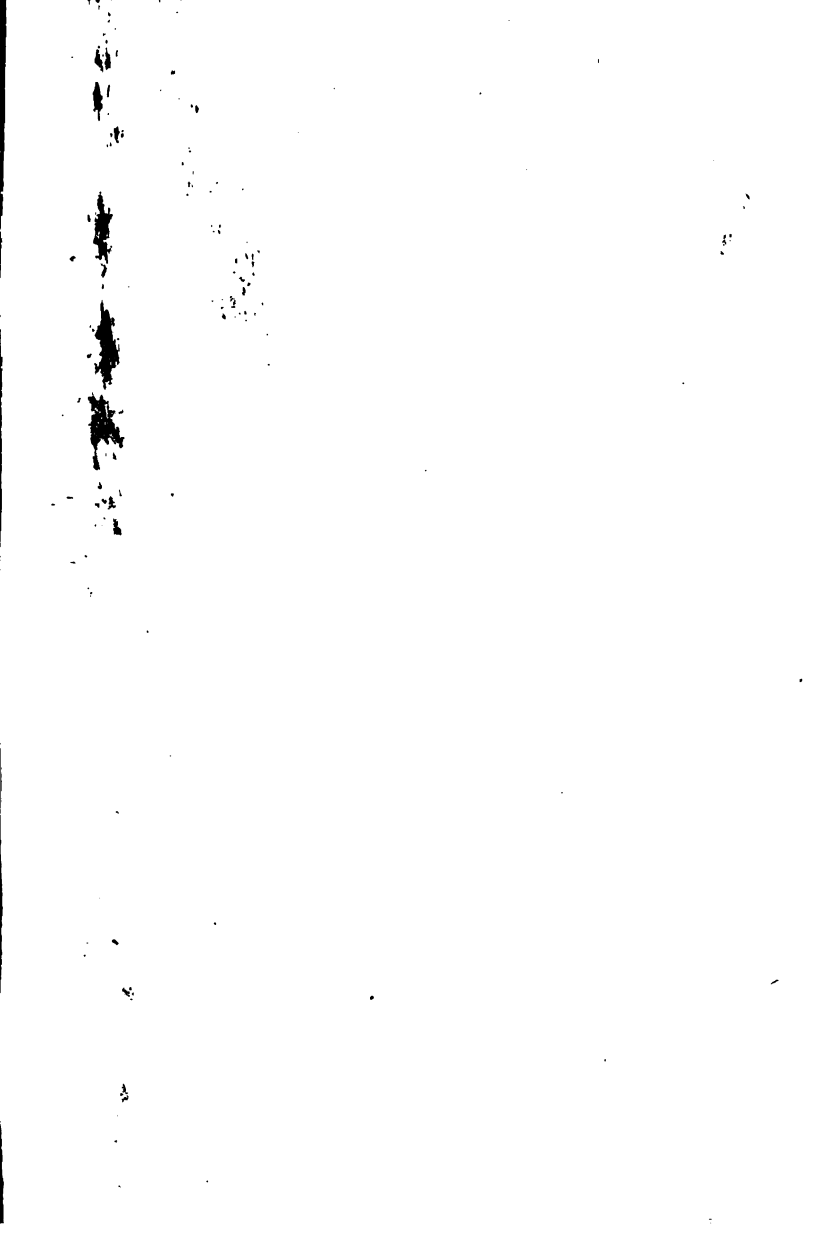
6. *History of Political Parties*, Pickard. An excellent summary of the political history of our country. Public-School Publishing Co. 25 cents.

7. *Words of Lincoln*. English classic series. Maynard Merrill & Co. Price, 12 cents.

8. *Epochs of American History*. Division and Reunion. By Wilson. This is the third of the series, and covers the period from 1829 to 1889. Full references.









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